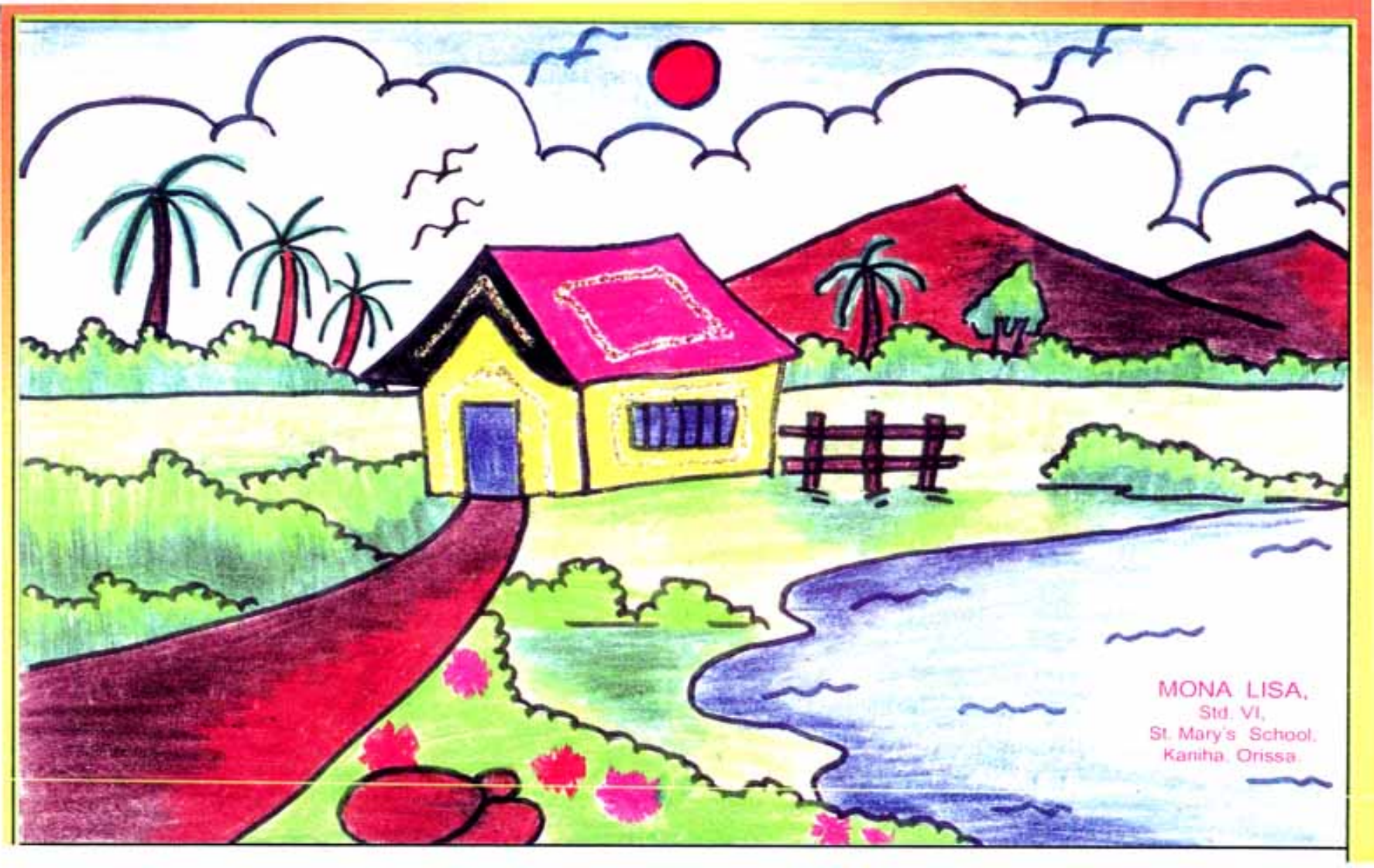
March 2009 Rs.10/- 80 Pages

GOKULAM

THE Magazine for Children

Be a Sport!


MONA LISA,
Std. VI,
St. Mary's School,
Kaniha, Orissa.

GOKULAM

THE Magazine for Children

March 2009 Vol.XXI, No.9

KALKI GROUP HOUSE of QUALITY

Of all created things the loveliest.
And most divine are children.
-William Canton

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KALKI GROUP
HOUSE of QUALITY

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THE Magazine for Children

Dear Readers,

A twentyfive year old stuntman who doubles for Daniel Radcliffe, was seriously injured during the shooting of the latest H.P. movie, "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince." He fell on the ground when a flying scene was being filmed. It is reported that he will not be able to feel anything from waist down owing to the back injury sustained by him. The film may be a run-away success when released; but for the stuntman it has proved to be a life time misery.

Overrated Stars and Underpaid Dupes

This is not the only cinema-shooting tragedy that we hear of. All over the world so many stuntmen take enormous risks and meet with serious accidents for the sake of a living wage. The top stars don't have to take any risk but get all the credit for the amazing feats performed by their dupes!

Next time you see an over-rated swash buckling hero in an action movie, think of the poor stuntman who took all the risks on behalf of the mega star, but was underpaid. We may not be able to change the system, but atleast we can change our perception of the system.

- Editor

Put up your feet after the exams!

WATCH OUT!

GOKULAM April 2009

SHORT STORY SPECIAL!

Stories of all sizes, shapes and colours!

Adventures of Sitamma and the Twin Ghosts

- A BRAND NEW SERIAL

FEATURING :

DAMAN BABA

- the evil sorcerer

SITAMMA

- the cheekly, brave girl in search of a Truth

KURALI - GNYAMALI

- the twin ghosts with an identity crisis!

VANITHAI

- the Enchanting Priestess

THE VIDHAM MOUNTAINS

- the mysterious abode of magical waters, powerful herbs and healing plants!

- Story & Illustrations by :

JAYA MADHAVAN

ENOUGH EXCITEMENT TO TAKE YOUR BREATH AWAY!

APARNA SUNDARESAN

Be a Sport!

"It's 7 o'clock! Time to come home and wash up!"

"Amma, wait! Just five more minutes!"

Fifteen minutes pass...

"It's 7:15! Are you coming home or not?"

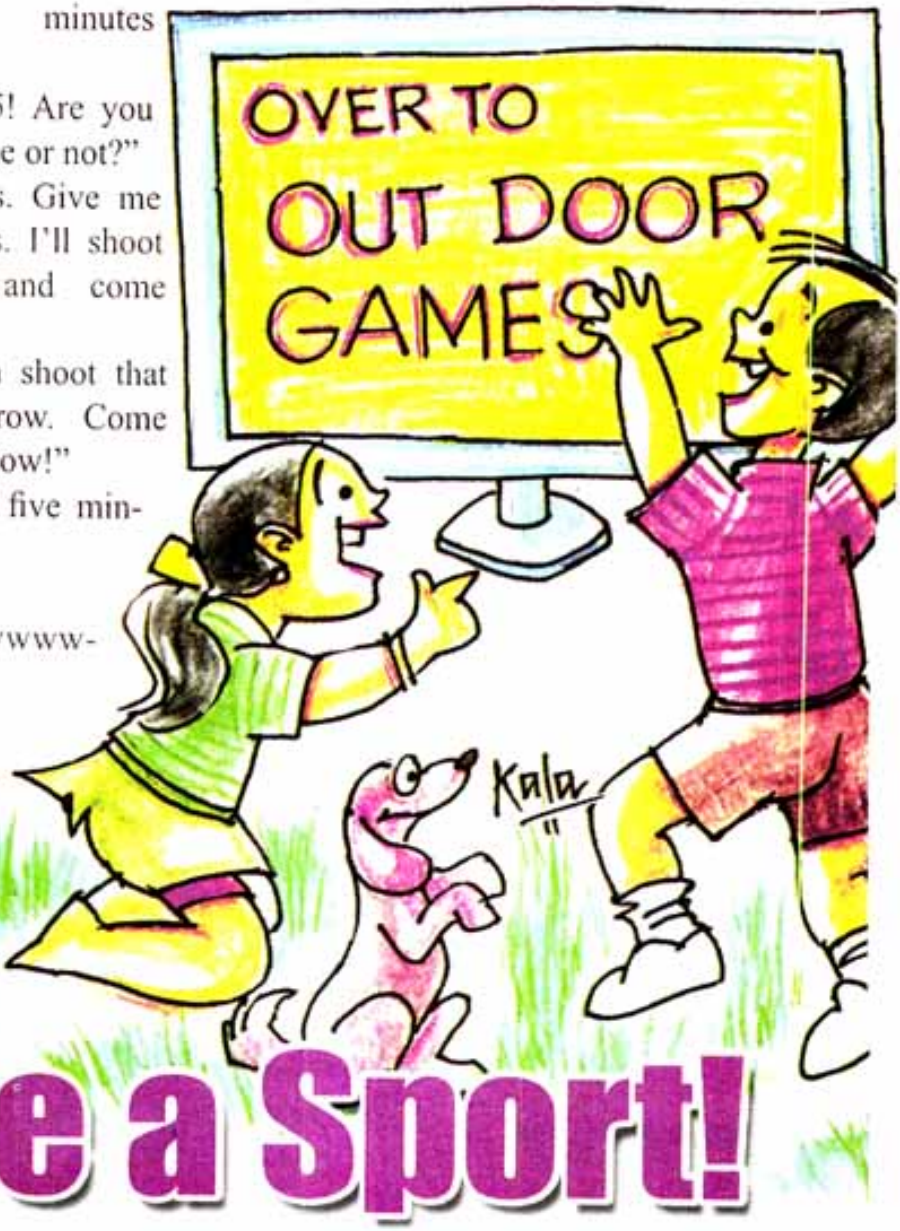
"Yes, yes. Give me five minutes. I'll shoot this goal and come home."

"You can shoot that goal tomorrow. Come home right now!"

"But just five minutes!"

"No!"

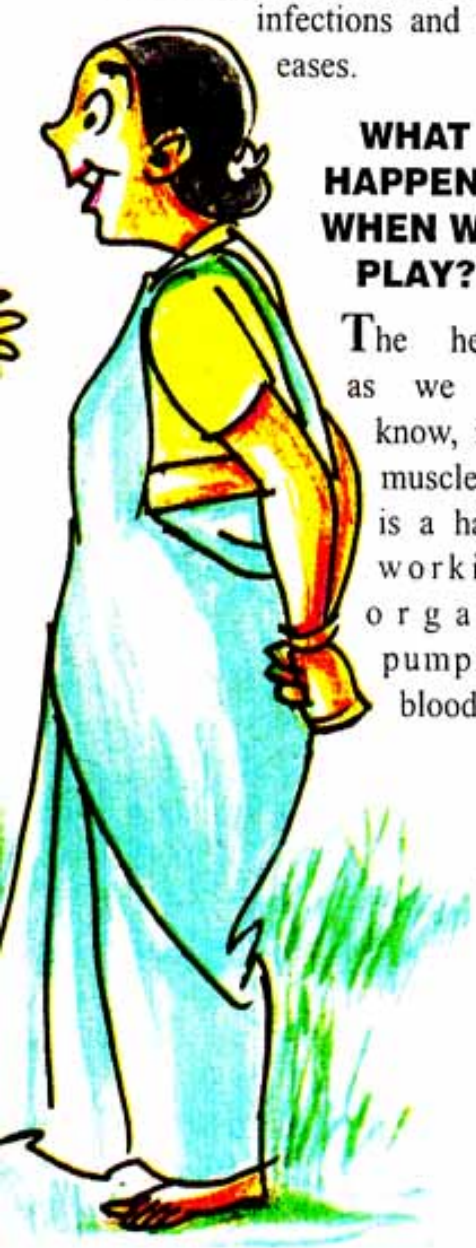
"Awwwwwwwwwwwww..."



Sounds familiar? It happens everyday, at every home, every evening. We never seem to get enough of playing, especially a sport.

What is it about sports that attract us to it like bees to honey? Children, by nature, are active. They are boundless sources of energy. Engaging in a physical activity is a good way of channelling

that energy and keeping the brain healthy and happy. But apart from keeping the brain juices flowing, sports also help build a strong body that is less susceptible to injuries, infections and diseases.



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE PLAY?

The heart, as we all know, is a muscle. It is a hard-working organ, pumping blood to every nook and cranny of our body. When we play a sport, our breathing becomes faster than normal. We start taking in more oxygen and so, the heart ups its speed by a notch or two to keep up with the inflow of oxygen. It pumps blood faster and distributes oxygen to various body parts in record time. In short, the heart gets a workout as well. And if the heart is made to workout everyday, it will get better and better at delivering oxygen to all parts of the body. When the brain, especially, receives more oxygen, it gets smarter and more efficient. Concentration and memory power improve and the brain starts paying more attention to details.

Apart from the heart, muscles in our limbs, shoulders, abdomen and back become durable and flexible too. With regular sport activities, climbing, swinging, lifting and throwing become easy as pie. Bending and stretching turn into simple feats as arms and legs move freely without feeling any tightness or pain.

Playing a sport also keeps our body in check. Body weight remains, by and large, steady and well-distributed. The body turns into a chiselled and proportionate frame, no less than Hercules' figure!

If we develop our body while we are still young, it will remain

healthy for life. And the best exercise for body-building is, no doubt, sports. Yet, strange as it may seem, not all children like sports. Some

like to stay indoors and read, write, paint, watch television or play computer games. While these activities are not bad at all, some sport is essential to keep the body going. Otherwise, it will look and behave like it is fifty years old when we are fifteen and eighty years old when we are thirty. Not very pleasant, is it?

SOME HATE SPORTS!

Some of us do not like sports for numerous reasons; few of us have difficulty understanding the rules, or have had a bad prior experience, or simply do not enjoy a game. These can be easily overcome. Parents and friends are always more than willing to answer questions on sports. In fact, with so many sports channels on TV, getting answers is no problem nowadays. It is also important to find the right sport – one that we enjoy and seem to have a knack for. Who says cricket is the only sport to play in India? We can pick and choose from swimming, running, skating, gymnastics, hockey, tennis, cycling, martial arts, table tennis, badminton and many, many more. Each sport is unique in the benefits it offers.

Previous bad experiences are more difficult to counter. Undue pressure may have been put on many of us, to reach perfection or constantly win. But this goes against the very nature of sports. A sport should be played for the love of it. Victory is only a bonus in the process of playing. Someone once said, "If you never lose, you can never appreciate the victories." In fact, true victory is not made of a tally of wins and losses. It is made of effort. When we give the best we can, we automatically become winners.

YOUR JOY IS YOUR MEDAL!

It is also not at all necessary to

excel in a sport to play it. Is it not a common sight to see uncles and aunties, senior citizens, and tiny tots enjoy a good round of cricket or any other sport? Are they world champions or Olympic medalists? Of course not!

Susan Casey, a noted writer, is quoted to have said, "Sports remain a great metaphor for life's more difficult lessons. It was through athletics that many of us first came to understand that fear can be tamed; that on a team the whole is more than the sum of its parts; and that the ability to be heroic lies, to a surprising degree, within." Sports are amazing character-builders. They boost confidence levels, help conquer shyness and fear, and teach the importance of team work and friendship. These benefits of playing sport lead to what is commonly referred to as "sportsmanship". We are often told to "be a sport". What this means is that we play a game in the right spirit – play to have fun, not necessarily win – and face our victories and losses in just the same way. Be stoic enough to accept defeat and move on with a resolution to do better the next time, view the opposition as a good challenge to sharpen our skills, hold no grudge towards members of the opposing team and consider them as friends, not mortal enemies! And understand, that in a team sport, each member of the team is valuable and nothing is possible without the co-operation and contributions of all members. At the end of the day, sportsmanship deflates our egos and keeps us rooted to earth. The best part of it is that it improves us as human beings both on and off the field.

• Playing in the right spirit - Federer and Nadal

Whether we play with a ball or no ball, with sticks or stones, with bats or racquets, sports has something to offer for all of us. It is up to us to accept it and make the best of it.

The school looked completely different on the Annual Day. There was a sense of anxiety, tension, confusion in the air! More important, there was an all-round zest and eagerness to take our fiesta to its peak. Mr. Ramdass, our Principal, escorted the chief guests, Mr. Rajendra Prasad – Parliamentary Secretary of Karnataka CM and Ms. Bharathy, AGM – IOB, to the dais.

The function began with the school choir singing the invocation song in praise of Lord Ganesha, the God of knowledge, to help us in all our endeavours and bestow us with his blessings. Subsequently, the annual report and the co-curriculum report were presented. The toppers were honoured as the report was read out.

All the teachers and students were anxiously waiting for the '**Cultural Fiesta**' – ready to rock. The different types of dances from all over the nation and the world, left the audience spell bound!! Our class VIII girls and boys staged a neat and extraordinarily graceful dance to a Hindi Song. There were mime shows on issues like deforestation, evils of tobacco, etc.

Each programme was presented in a unique manner with every participant giving his heart and soul to it. It was truly appreciable and commendable. The audience could not take it's eyes off the stage. The function came to an end with a vote of thanks by the school vice captain.

Then it was time to say bye to all, but the five hours of incredible fascinating show was not only a feast to our eyes but also a special evening with lots of memories to cherish..

- V.Ranjana,
Std.VIII,
JSS Public School, Mysore.

5 Fascinating

SEVEN DAYS OF FUN!

Our school is one of the leading institutions in Coimbatore district. We have four houses in our school named after the planets, Jupiter, Neptune, Uranus and Mercury. All the four houses comprise of enormously talented students.

Last July 'Fantasia', the inter-house competitions, were held in our school for one week. Just imagine no books, no studies! Only a joyful learning experience for the whole week. About 44 events were conducted from classes one to twelve and 47 judges from various fields, tested our skills.

The winners were awarded certificates and points were added to their respective houses. Day after day the competition became tough and challenging and each and every student had to strive hard for his or her respective house to keep the lead.

In the sports field, volley ball and the basket ball matches attracted all the students. Scrabble, Mad Ads, News and Debate were other popular indoor competitions. Our teachers, principal and correspondent encouraged us to participate with zeal.

The 'Overall Winners' were announced after a long suspense, on the last day. The entire week had been filled with team spirit, leadership and joy. It was truly a stunning, thrilling and also an unforgettable week.

- S.Ravee Shankar,
Std.XI
G. D. Matric H.S.S.,
Coimbatore.

Hours!

The length of your foot is the same as that of your forearm – ie, the distance between your wrist and the inside of your elbow. Check it now!

- M.Manoj,
Std.X,
Balabharathi and Vivekananda H.S, Bellary

MAKE SALT DANCE!

Take a piece of plastic wrap and cover a cereal bowl with it. Fix the wrap in place tightly with a rubber band. Now you have an artificial 'ear drum' that works exactly like our own ear drums.

Our ear drums vibrate when sound waves fall on them. The same happens to the wrap over the cereal bowl. Proof? Place a small quantity of table salt on the wrap and make some noise from near it. You will find that the salt gently moves and slides round on the wrap! This is because the wrap is vibrating due to the sound waves! The louder the noise, the faster the salt dances!

This is exactly how the human ear drum works. The vibrations it receives are communicated to the brain, which comprehends them as meaningful language.

- Meenakshi,
Std.X, S.B.Khot High School, Mumbai

CHECK

ULTA PULTA!

How are a jeweller and a jailor alike?

Answer : A jeweller sells watches and a jailor watches cells!

What is black when you buy it,

red when you use it and gray when thrown away?

Answer : Charcoal!

What can you serve but

never eat?

Answer : A volley ball.

What has a head, a foot and four legs?

Answer : A bed!

Why was Cinderella never a part of the volley ball team?

Answer : Because she kept running away from the ball!

- Akhila Raj, Std.VII, Sivani International School, Hyderabad

HOUSIE!

Mr. Wilson built a cubical house with ordinary windows in all the upright walls. He found that whenever he looked out of the window, he was looking south. Where did he build his house?

Answer : One cannot imagine a cubical igloo at the North Pole. But if there were one and if it had windows, they would all look south!

- Somya Vasudevan, Std.IX, M.G.C. Vidyalaya, Trichy

A Reluctant

Nearly three months after the event, and after several protests, excuses and negative statements, Pakistan finally accepted that the 26/11 Mumbai terrorist attack was planned in that country. Even so, they could not refrain from saying that it was only partly planned there and that they needed more in formation from India. However, they have registered cases of terrorism against eight suspects and that is a great leap forward, though a reluctant leap!

* Glorious 98

In what may be termed as a miracle an air bus aeroplane which struck a flock of birds soon after take of from New York, made an emergency landing in the Hudson river and all the 155 passengers escaped unhurt! They were ferried to the shore from the wings of the jet liner where they lined up. The pilot Sullenberger became a patronsaint for all the passengers!

* 11 hour surgery

The Srilankan army has liberated almost all of LTTE territory except for a few square kilometers in Mullaithivu district. In the last ditch battle the LTTE is using civilians as human shields, in order to slow down the advancing army. In Tamilnadu everyone wants an end to the war so that more innocent Tamil lives will not be lost. But Srilankan President Rajapaksa is bent upon eliminating the LTTE. Some underground bunkers of the LTTE supremo have been found but Prabhakaran could not be traced. Observers feel that he would have already escaped to some neutral country. It is hoped that Rajapaksa will keep up his promise to find a political solution to all the problems that the Tamils face in Srilanka and that peace and democracy will ultimately triumph.

Barack Obama was sworn in as

Leap Forward!

the 44th President of U.S.A. It is a remarkable achievement for a person who was unknown to the world only a few months back. he is the nation's fourth youngest President and the first black President. Having succeeded in moving into the White House, the world hopes that he will also succeed in reversing the world-wide economic slow down.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh underwent an eleven hour by-pass surgery. Five by-passes were done in blocked arteries. Doctors say he is recovering well and will attend to normal duties in six weeks time.

* Wicket No : 503

* Will he? Won't he?

Former President of India R.Venkataraman passed away at the ripe old age of 98. He started public life as a labour leader and from humble beginnings he rose gradually to occupy the highest position in the country.

* Escaped?

Srilanka's Muttiah Muralitharan became the highest wicket taker in ODIs, when Gambhir was caught in the fourth ODI between India and Srilanka. It was wicket No : 503 for Muttiah. However, India went on to win the match and the series 4 - 1. India also won the twenty - twenty match against Srilanka in a thrilling finish and Dhoni and his team returned to India in high spirits. The Indian team is now considered formidable in world cricket. ●

Ice Cream

Heavy dark clouds were gathering, getting ready to soak Mother Earth. Ajay was running with his ten kilogram burden known as 'School Bag'.

*Anna…Anna…please buy this story book, begged a small vendor. Ajay took pity on him and bought the story book "***The Magic Code Breaker***".

As soon as he reached home, he sat down to read the book and was quite excited over the puzzling short poem in the first page. It went…

I would wither
If 1+1 would join together
Teller! Teller! Teller!
You are the code breaker!

Reading these lines, Ajay felt very strange. He felt as if he had wings and was floating and was also able to fly!

Ajay tried to stop himself, but he started flying and flying till he landed on the top of an apple tree. Soon, he was plucking a juicy red

*** elder brother in tamil.**

apple. 'Whoosh' an arrow passed him, just missing. Before he realized what was happening, Ajay fell down with a jolt.

Oh....my God! who is this? Ajay was puzzled at the appearance of the boy standing in front of him!! He was a very handsome boy of around twelve years, and was looking at Ajay. Ajay introduced himself as 'a human boy' and the handsome boy introduced himself as 'Prince Ice of Marvel Land'.

"Marvel land? I have never heard of it!" exclaimed Ajay! "Well you see", said Prince Ice, "our Marvel land is very far from

Land

Earth. We 'Marvelites' were very happy until an evil monster - 'Mr. Evil' - captured our land and my parents, The King and Queen of Marvel land. They are now in the prison. My twin brother Price Cream and I are hiding in this Apple Forest.

Just then someone pounced on Prince Ice. Ajay was taken aback to see another Prince Ice. He then understood that it was Prince Ice's twin brother Prince Cream. They both started fighting with each other!

Ajay was unhappy to see them fight and asked them to stop. But Prince Ice and Prince Cream were rolling on each other and had to be pulled apart by Ajay. He then told them, that they should not fight with each other because they were brothers.

"Oh....stop!" shouted Prince Cream. "We never get along with each other, we always fight", he said in a matter of fact tone!

A bright idea struck Ajay. "Hey! What?" he exclaimed "May be I am the Teller the 'Puzzle Poem' mentions and I could be the

code-breaker too!"

"What on earth do you mean?"

Both Ice and Cream asked together.

Ajay explained the puzzle in the frontispiece of the book 'Magic Code Breaker'.

The first line

I would wither,

meant that Mr. Evil would wither.

If 1+1 would join hands and never fight

indicated that Prince Ice and Prince Cream should join hands and should never fight.

And the third and fourth line meant that Ajay would be the Code Breaker.

Prince Ice and Prince Cream joined hands and shouted, "Ice Cream!" and Bravo! Mr. Evil withered away and was dead!

Prince Ice and Cream together released their parents from the prison and were happy to see them as King and Queen again. They all thanked Ajay. Suddenly a huge west wind blew and Ajay found himself drawn and blown away and as he flapped his newly acquired pair of wings, he flew out of the strange land. Soon he found himself at home with the Magic Book on his lap. His wings had disappeared!

What a surprise! He couldn't find the puzzle in the book! But a large bowl of his favourite ice cream was in front of him, YUMMY!!

- Ajay Ashok, Std.VIII,
St. Michael's Academy, Chennai

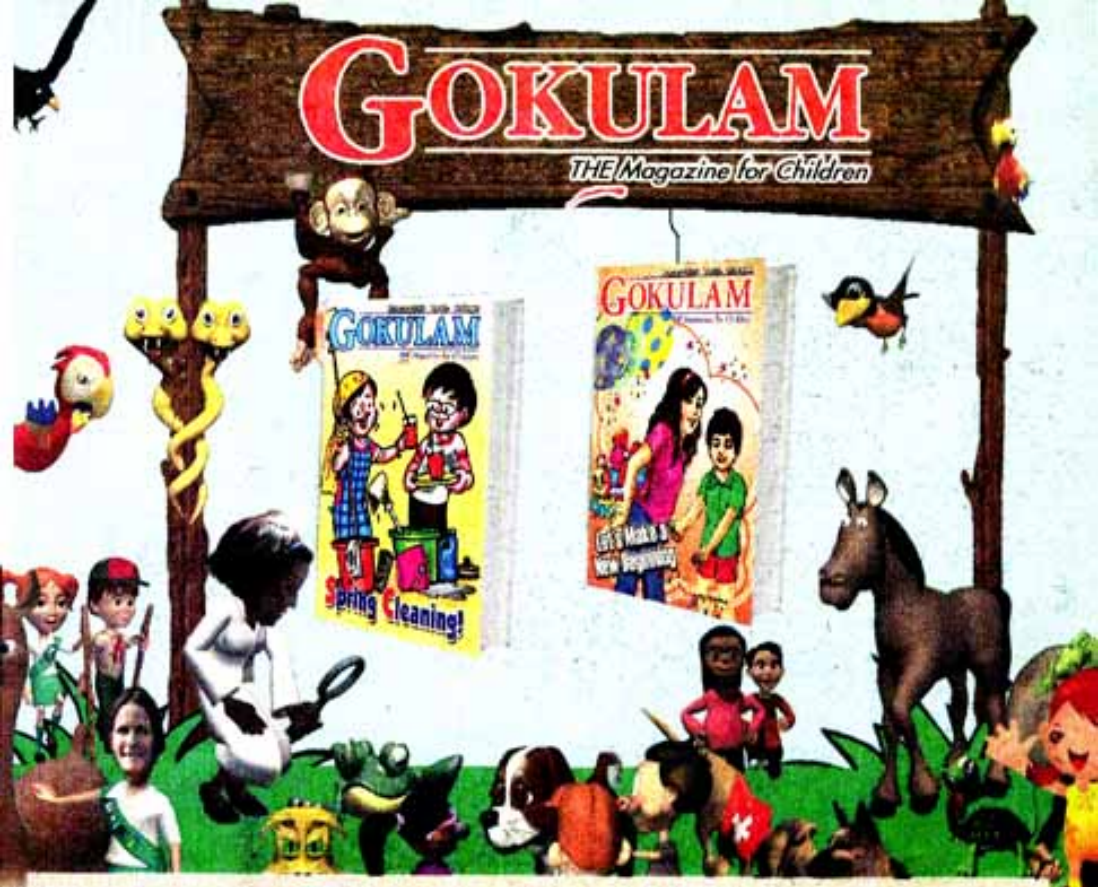
BIRTHDAY BASH

R.M.Aaswin celebrates his 12th birthday on 02.03.2009.

We wish him good health, happiness, prosperity and a bright future.

Wishes from

Mummy, Grandfather, Grandmother



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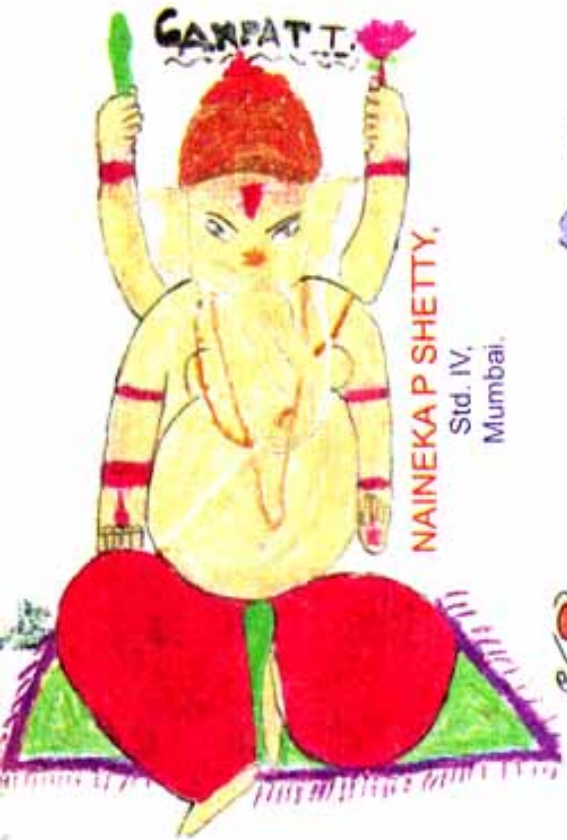

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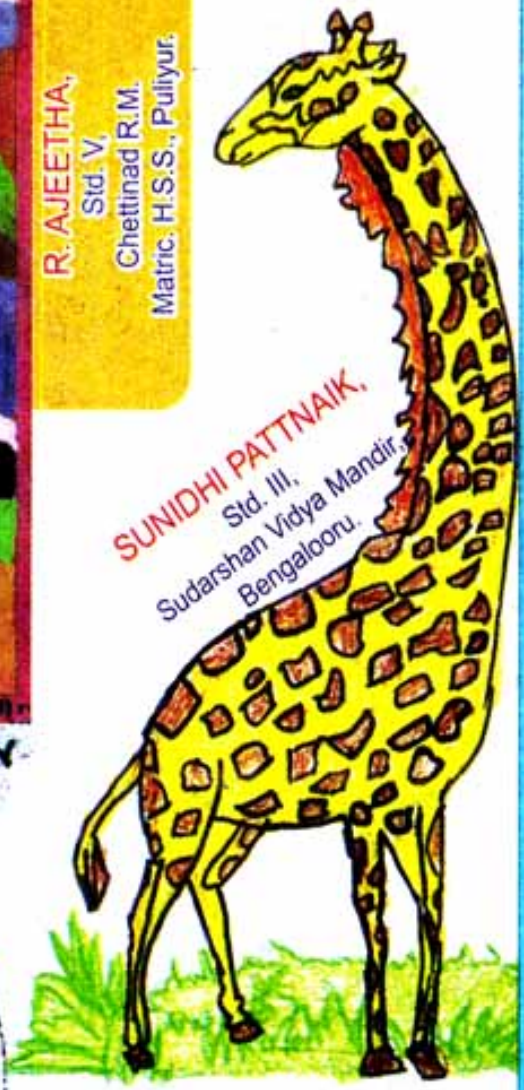


SUNIDHI PATTNAIK,
Std. III,
Sudarshan Vidya Mandir,
Bengalooru.

G.R. SOWNDHARYA,
K.G. II,
St. Anne Convent,
Goa.

* Coffee shrubs in flower

COFFEE'S

Set in the declining but still green Western Ghats in the South-West of Karnataka, Coorg is the heart of India's coffee centre. Coffee is the world's most heavily traded commodity after crude oil. Coorg boasts of a land area four times larger than Hongkong and seven times larger than that of Singapore. Most of it is under shade because unlike tea plants the coffee plant requires shade.

India is acknowledged as the producer of the finest mild coffees. With their climate, high altitude, abundant rainfall and fertile soil, Coorg and the neighbouring Chickmagalur districts in Karnataka have consistently produced and exported high quality coffee for more than 150 years. The coffee output of these two districts accounts for 70% of the total coffee produced in the country. Coorg coffee is valued for its blue colour, clean beans and fine liquoring qualities and hence is in demand in the international markets.

March and April are the coffee blossom time in coorg. When blossoms transform into berries, the bushes are cropped. The cherry red fruit is then pulped, the seeds are separated, dried and sent for curing. Coorg or Kodagu is the district

which is one of the chief producers of pepper and cardamom in the world.

Not much is known about the earlier history of Coorg. Recorded history is available only from 1600 A.D onwards, when Kodava Rajas ruled over the region and established their capital at Mercara by

* The red berries...

RELATIONSHIP WITH COORG!

constructing a mud-walled fort. The martial Kodavas troubled Hyder Ali and his son Tipu Sultan, who ruled the Mysore region (including Coorg) in the eighteenth century, by way of sporadic rebellions. But in 1785, Tipu's large army marched into Kodagu and devastated the kingdom. Fourteen years later, with the help of the British, who defeated Tipu Sultan, following the historic siege of Srirangapatnam in 1799, Coorg regained independence and under the leadership of Raja Veerarajendra, rebuilt the capital. Later in 1834, the British exiled its ruler Chikkaveera Rajendra and assumed administrative charge of the district. The British vacated India in 1947, leaving behind a legacy of coffee plantations, colonial buildings and well planned road networks in Coorg.

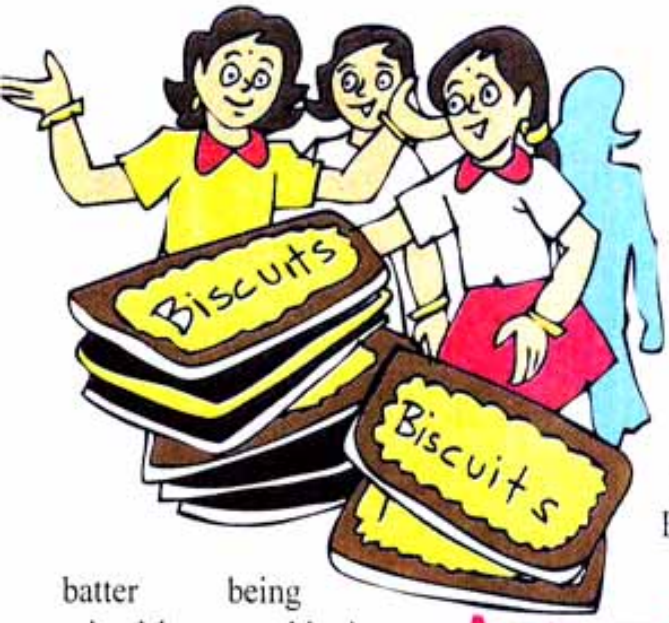
- Sujatha. S. Iyer, Std.IX, Sri Sankara Sr. Sec. School, Chennai

* A temple in Coorg.

A MOUTH-WATERING

When I was in class IV, our school took us to the Parle Biscuit factory. We left the school premises at 8.45 am and reached the factory at ten o clock. We saw the biscuit batter being mixed by a machine! The factory had ten different units for the different varieties of biscuits. The biscuits were baked in a huge vessel. The aroma that filled the whole place was so nice that our mouths started watering! We learnt how difficult it is to make the lovely biscuits and also to maintain the place clean and neat. It took nearly an hour to make a thousand biscuits and about forty five minutes to bake them in the oven. The visit was entertaining and educative.

- G.Kirthana,
Std.VIII, K.V,
Coimbatore



FOUR-D SCARE!

We had been for a family function at Bengalooru and decided to visit the Innovative Film city. It was a really entertaining place. The most enjoyable part of it was the dinosaur park. It was not at all scary. But the four-D film on dino-

saurs was really scary. I began to cry mid-way through it and my aunt and mother had to console me. We were very excited when we saw the Kannada actor Ganesh. My cousins and I ran up to him to take his autograph. Unfortunately for me, the pen we had would not write! I felt really sad, but we managed to have a photo taken with the actor.

- M.Kruthika,
Std.VI,
St.Joseph's High School,
Belgaum

MOCK ELECTIONS!

One Saturday afternoon our Civics teacher conducted a mock election. She had informed us about it a few days in advance. We had prepared the ballot papers, election box, and other things. We secretly planned to cast some fake votes! The candidates we nominated were our Maths sir, our Biology sir, Geography sir and Physics sir! Our Civics teacher was surprised to find ten fake votes! However, she took it in her stride and did not scold us. The winning candidate was our Maths sir. (He had won not counting the fake votes!) We burst crackers to celebrate his victory. It was real fun and we enjoyed the mock election very much and also understood how challenging it is to conduct

elections in our country.

- J.Vishnu, Std.X,
Shiksha Kendra MHSS, Vellore

DANCED AWAY!

I participated in the dance programme for Flyerz Dance School last year in summer. It was held in the Russian Cultural Centre. We practiced our dance for two months during the holidays, before presenting it on stage. The Hindi film song 'It's the time to disco' had been chosen for us to dance to. I wore a beautiful white frock and my mother's pretty ear rings and necklace set. I also used her lipstick and eyeliner. Our show started at seven pm and ten other children danced with me. All our parents clapped and cheered us. I really enjoyed taking part in this programme.

- Khushi Suraj, Std.III,
St.Michael's Academy, Chennai

'SHOCKED' SIGHT!

Some weeks ago, we went to get a pair of new spectacles for our father. He suggested that we too should have our eyes tested – my brother and I. I was quite sure that I had no problem with my eyes and it would be my brother who would have to wear specs. But it was not so! The doctor said that I had very high short sight and asked me to see a specialist! I was quite shocked. After due checks and tests, I have been given glasses. I wear them now. I wish I had listened to my parents and teachers when they asked me not read lying down or in dim light. I appeal to all Gokulam readers to adhere to correct reading practices.

- Mira Shankar,
Std.V, Indian School,
Sohar, Muscat

Pumpkin Juice

Ingredients :

Two cups of pumpkin chopped into chunks (get an adult to do this for you)

Two cups of apple juice, half a cup of pineapple juice (can be made at home or bought from a juice outlet)

One teaspoon of honey (more if you are fond of sweet taste)

A piece of cinnamon, a cube of fresh ginger, a piece of nutmeg – all ground

Method :

Juice the pumpkins in a mixie or juicer.

Pour the pumpkin juice, pineapple juice and apple juice into a blender and blend thoroughly.

Add honey (start with one spoon and add more if you find it is not sweet enough).

Add the spices in right proportion. (This will require some trial and error)

Chill the juice or serve with ice cubes.

(A Hogwarts recipe! Sourced from internet)

Note: Red pumpkins are used at Hogwarts. Indian , white pumpkins could also be tried.

- J.Vishnu, Std.X,
Shiksha Kendra MHSS, Vellore

Budding Bards

My Family

I love my dad
He hates to see me mad
I love my mom
Her cooking tastes yum!
I love my car
It takes me near and far
I love my toys
They make me rejoice
I love my school
The teachers are cool
I love my home
And wherever I roam,
I go back to it,
My comfort zone!

- C.Kavya, Std.VIII,
Jnanodaya School, Bengalooru

Trees

While travelling by train
I could see the dark shadows
of the trees
I could see the leaves
shaking violently
I could hear the cries of anger
and sadness
Forests, where the trees
held meetings
Where they sang their
melodies sweet
Where they danced happily,
boughs flung out
Were all destroyed.

How can the trees find peace?
We have taken everything
from them
We never repay them
Noting but rude words and brutal
gestures
We pluck them out from the
crevices of our walls
Tolerance is what they have,
like Gandhiji
But we humans
Do we ever think in the right way?

- B.Shreevidhya, Std.VIII,
T.V.S.M.H.S.S, Madurai

Time

Time is precious time is precious
We never know how it passes
We never know how we've used it
Till it's really end of day!

Time is precious time is precious
It does not wait for us.
It goes on ticking, ticking, ticking
We had better not miss the bus!

Time is precious time is precious
It truly is our friend
If we know this, and we feel this,
Our ways we'll truly mend

Time is precious time is precious
Without it we cannot live
It's value can't be measured really
Our best we had better give.

- S.Sai Shekher, Std.IV,
J.S.S. Public School,
Mysore

Grandmother

Before I was born, I had a fear
I worried about the people here.
I told God I hated Earth
And did not look forward to birth.

He laughed gently and said
To protect me I'd have a mother
To play I would have a brother
To teach me right there'd be father

Though I was pacified,
I had a doubt
God asked me what it was about
"Who would tell me a fine story?"
Was to God my anxious query.

"Who will care and keep me warm
When Dad's at work and
so is mom?
Whom will I look up to?
When chided for the mischief
I am up to?"

"Don't you worry! There will
be a lady
To protect and love you ever ready
After deep thought I have made her
She's none other than your
grandmother!"

- Saranya S. Hariharan,
Std.IX, Atomic Energy Central
School No.1, Mumbai

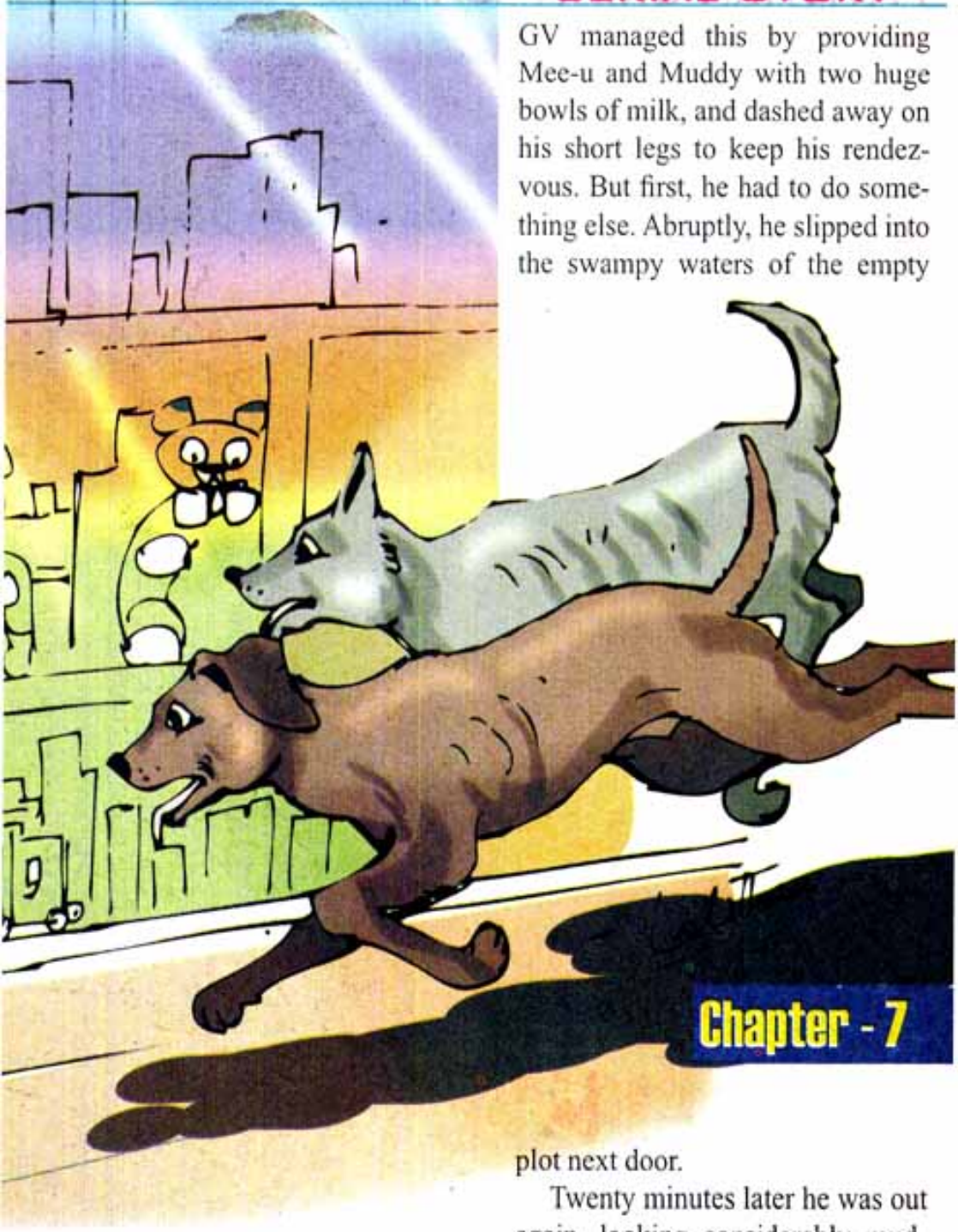
PAVITHRA SRINIVASAN

CA(UGH)T IN THE CITY!

Two days later, morning dawned fine and clear – making Peppy feel more refreshed than she had felt in many days. She had left for school every morning her heart in her mouth, wondering if she would come home to find GV's mangled, and dead body. Had she known of her pet's nocturnal expeditions, she would have kept him under lock and key for good. As it was, she left that morning, secure in the knowledge that GV finally seemed to be learning the basics of safety, in company of Mee-u and Muddy.

GV had managed to keep very quiet about his meeting with his arch-enemy – in fact, he still couldn't believe he had come away in one piece. The shock had left him shaken for a few hours, and he'd found it difficult to get back to sleep, making Peppy worried. Even more difficult had been keeping his news from Mee-u and Muddy; they certainly would skin him alive if they knew.

And so, no one knew that he'd made plans to be in the Nag Department Store on the third main



Chapter - 7

GV managed this by providing Mee-u and Muddy with two huge bowls of milk, and dashed away on his short legs to keep his rendezvous. But first, he had to do something else. Abruptly, he slipped into the swampy waters of the empty road, that afternoon.

Slipping away in daylight was more difficult than at night – but plot next door.

Twenty minutes later he was out again, looking considerably muddy, but triumphant, carrying his prize in his mouth. He padded along the lanes, careful to keep in

the shadows, beside gate-posts and thus out of the scrutiny of humans.

Soon, he arrived at Nag's Department Store. He slunk at the door, carefully sidling through when no one was looking. The shop was dark and cool inside, but GV had no time to refresh himself. He stared edgeways at the irate shopkeeper, leapt gracefully onto a small shelf right of his sight, dropped his burden and slunk out. As he stood by the dustbin outside the shop, he espied the big brown dog and his cohorts. As the brown dog watched, GV swept off in a flash – to wait by the side of the tea-stall.

The morning was slow – a typical day in the rather sleepy road. People lounged about; four or five were at the tea-stall. A corporation van trundled up slowly. A policeman spoke desultorily into the phone. Two men jumped out of the van and looked around. It was the kind of day when nothing ever happened.

And then – a scream!

Nag Store's fat shopkeeper, Nag, ran shrieking, out of the shop, at the top of his voice. "A snake! A cobra! Someone! Help!"

The street seemed to galvanize into action. The men at the tea stall ran helter-skelter; the corporation van's occupants jumped three feet in the air – while the policeman stared at the shopkeeper, stupefied

"Someone get the snake inside my shop!" shouted Nag, appealing to the whole street in general. "It's ten feet long – it hissed at me – I ..."

"Call the police!" shouted someone. "Someone get sticks!" "Why don't you call the Blue Cross?" "What about a snake-charmer?"

People ran to and fro. Nag stood

at a safe distance, still shouting, while the policeman dialed numbers frantically. Suddenly the street was full of people – who all stood about twenty feet away from the shop entrance. No one would go in.

"Why won't someone help?" screamed Nag, again.

Months later, onlookers would describe the scene they just witnessed as nothing short of a miracle. As petrified watchers stared, a group of four dogs tore through the crowd, barking at the top of their voices. They were led by a large brown dog that raced straight through the people and into the darkened store.

"Oh my god – what was that?" shouted someone. "The dogs! Get the dogs!" – someone else. "What about the snake? Can't the corporation men get the snake and the dogs?" But the corporation men seemed to be as nervous as everyone else.

Within a minute, everyone could hear barks again. The dogs came tearing out – and this time, the brown dog had a large snake trapped within its teeth.

Shrieks arose. "Look – the snake!"

Before anyone could react, the brown dog dropped the writhing snake down into the street and stamped on it. In front of an astonished audience, it bit its neck, killing it swiftly. And then all the dogs sat back on their haunches, waiting.

It took a few minutes before ev-

eryone recovered their senses. "Did you see that?" people murmured. "Those dogs actually killed the snake – as though they'd heard our call!"

Excited murmurs turned into full-blown exclamations. "So much for you corporation men and the police," said Nag, to the sheepish policeman. "These dogs have done a much better job of protecting us."

"Actually, we came here to round up the dogs," admitted one of the corporation men. "We've had complaints that they were being a menace to people."

"I don't know who complained," said someone else. "But you needn't round them up now – they're proving to be a blessing."

"But you can't have half a dozen street-dogs running amok!" protested the policeman.

"No – I'm going to adopt this brown one," said Nag. "He can guard my shop; I'll feed him. I owe him." He patted the brown dog. "One dog isn't going to bankrupt me."

Approving whispers rose around him. "Four or five dogs won't be a problem – as long as we all share the cost of feeding them," supplied someone else. "We could get a proper trainer to train them to guard us. They'll tear any thieves to bits."

And suddenly, the atmosphere had changed. Instead of being chased and stoned, the dogs were heroes, basking in public approval. Everyone wanted to pat or cheer them. Someone else threw the hapless snake into a dustbin. As people began to make excited plans to share dog-duty, GV slunk out from behind the tea-shop. He padded away a little distance, and then stared at the brown dog, through the crowd. The brown dog stared back stonily.

And then he gave a slow wink.

***

One lazy afternoon, a month later, three plump cats sunned themselves on the compound wall.

"I still can't believe you went straight to those dogs and actually talked them into helping humans," marveled Mee-u. "Catching a rat-snake, smuggling it into the shop – you really have grown brave, haven't you?'

"Rat-snakes are harmless. For the dogs, food was the biggest problem – and fear of being stoned," said GV seriously, watching a lady pour some milk into a large bowl at her front door. "Now they're happy – so they're not attacking anyone."

A large brown dog trotted up and lapped busily at the milk. There were no sores on his body; he looked well-fed, and his eyes were clear. GV stretched himself.

"So where are you going tonight, Big-Tooth?" he asked the dog.

"The fifth main road. Nag was saying that he heard someone throwing stones on his home at night."

"Can I come with you?"

Big-Tooth looked at him slyly. "You're just a little cat," he barked, much to the amazement of Mee-u and Muddy. "What can you do?"

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1.3.2009

Lakshmi Natarajan
Publisher

In answer, GV leapt down gracefully and galloped down the street. Big-Tooth loped after him joyfully, and the two began a protracted game of Hide-and-Seek.

"Who'd have thought …" marveled Muddy. "… that a cat would bell a dog?"

"D'you know what I think?"

"What?"

"I think GV is a Super-Cat."

For once, Muddy was in complete agreement.

THE END.

GOKULAM -My Project

I have been reading Gokulam from the age of eight. I still feel excited to read it every month. I like the editorial page very much. I would like to say 'Gokulam is my treasure chest of knowledge!' Please bring back Harry Potter.

- Anupya Choudary,
Std.V, Evershine Nagar,
Mumbai

Gokulam is a marvellous magazine, yet I am sad because the Harry Potter snippets have not returned. Please bring Harry Potter back. Can I send reviews about books, movies, etc.?

- Arun R, Age 10,
Poorna Learning Centre,
Bengalooru

I am Aura Krishna from Pondicherry. I love to read this magazine. It is very interesting and informative. I want to thank the Gokulam team for giving us such a

lovely book. You know what, I love to do botany projects. I got lots of information about trees from Gokulam for my project.

- Aura Krishna, Pondicherry

I love to read Gokulam. I tried out the home-made chocolate and biscuit laddoos and it really was tasty. Can you publish Pottering Around in every issue of Gokulam?

- Navya Kesav

(Navya Kesav, such a sweet letter is incomplete without details of your school, class and your address!)

I always think of Gokulam as a dear friend. It teaches me all the good

things in this world. Thank you dear friend.

- D. M. Viswatha, Std.VII, Dindigul

I started reading Gokulam at the age of five. It still remains my favourite. Can I send book reviews and stories without pictures? And can you suggest some more innovative pieces to be sent?

- V.N. Pratap, Std. IV
SBOA Matric Hr. Sec. School

(Yes, Pratap, Arun and other readers. You may send book reviews and pictures... and discuss with your friends about innovative features. - Editor)

Partner!

I am from Srilanka. Will you please send Gokulam early to Srilanka?

- Vinotheeba Reginald, Grade 7, Good Shepherd Convent, Kotahena, Srilanka

I was happy to see my contribution to View Point published in the November and December issues. I thank Gokulam. I love your thought provoking articles and jokes. Please make Gokulam a fortnightly.

- S. Suganthan, Std. IX, D.A.V. Bhel School, Ranipet – 6.

In the December issue the story, 'How Dare You Eat a Tiger!' was very funny. I like 'Ca(ugh)t in the City' very much too. Very soon I am going to subscribe to Gokulam.

- Radhika Jayaraj, Std.VI
Kola Perumal Chetty Vaishnav S.S.S., Chennai

I am happy that some of my contributions to Gokulam get published and I am thrilled to receive the prize money. I regularly write short stories for a Kannada Magazine (Mangala). Can I send the translated version of the same story for publication in Gokulam?

- Maanasa Natrajan, Std.V, Bengalooru

(Please try to write original English stories for Gokulam, Manasa.- Editor)

JOKES

Bunty : What do you call a man sitting inside a watch shop?

Vinodh : A cashier?

Bunty : No, watchman! Ha ha aha!

- Shyamala Pillai, Std.VIII, Welspun Vidya Mandir, Gandhigram, Gujarat

Pramod : What did Suppandi do after taking a Xerox?

Swapna : Can't guess.

Pramod : He started comparing the copy with the original.

- K.Nehanandan, Std.IX, Doddaballapur

Teacher : Why do you think cave men drew pictures of rhinoceroses and hippopotamuses on the walls?

Student : Because they could not spell their names!

- V.Vaishali, Std.VII, Seetha Kingston M.H.S.S, Chennai

Arun : Little girl, why are you crying?

Girl : I came here for my blood test and they took my blood.

Arun : Oh, no.... I have come here for my eye test!

- A.Aswin Vayiravan, Std.XI, T.V.S.S.M.H.S.S, Madurai

A Golden Career!

A.R. Rahman has come a long way since his childhood days when he played the keyboard for other music directors. A look at his life story…

INITIAL YEARS

He was born A. S. Dileep Kumar on January 6 1966 in what was then Madras. His father R. K. Shekhar was a music composer for Malayalam films. Shekhar died when Dileep was nine-years-old, leaving the family to live on monies they earned renting out music equipment.

Rahman initially studied at PSBB School in Madras, then moved on to another school. He played the keyboard and arranged music for bands and for percussionist friend Sivamani. Young Dileep knew how to play several music instruments and loved the synthesizer. When he was eleven-years-old, he joined music director Ilaiyaraja's troupe as a keyboard player. He also played for M. S. Viswanathan, accompanied Zakir Hussain and other musicians. He graduated from the Trinity College of Music in London in Western classical music.

Dileep became Rahman when he and his family converted to Sufism in 1989.

THE SPARK OF A CAREER

Rahman began

SANDHYA SRIDHAR

to compose jingles for advertisements, background music for documentaries and for television channels. He began his own recording studio in his home and called it the Panchathan Record Inn. That same year, director Mani Ratnam came to him to compose music for his film Roja, and the rest as they say, is history. Rahman went on to win the Best Music Director Award at the National Film Awards, making history again as the first first-time composer to receive this award. He has won this award three times now. Roja was not just critically acclaimed – it went on to record good sales and there was no looking back for Rahman now. Bollywood, as the Hindi film industry is called, beckoned, and so did international theatre (Bombay Dreams) and films. He is now one of the world's top selling artists.

FAME

After Roja, Rahman was feted and acclaimed as the talented New Kid on the Block. Recognition in the form of awards followed, from his state, from various award bodies and from international critics. On the 50th anniversary of Independence, he made an album - Vande Mataram.

He recently became the first Indian to win the coveted Golden Globe for his music in the film Slumdog Millionaire for the Best Original Score. And he has done India proud again by being nominated for three award categories at the Oscars 2009 – the Best Origi-

PRASANNA

There is a doubly happy smile on guitarist Prasanna's face. An NRI settled in the US, Prasanna is the musician who scored the BGM for yet another Oscar nomination – 'Smile Pinkie'. This short documentary directed by Megan Mylan, one of the most respected documentary film makers in the U.S., was shot in India and is about Indian children born with cleft palate and how happily they can be rehabilitated by effective surgery. In many parts of India, cleft palate

nal Score and for two songs under the category Best Original Songs. The three nominations are again for Slumdog Millionaire.

THE FAMILY MAN

Rahman is known to be a deeply religious family man. His wife Saira Bano and he have three children, Khatija, Rahima, and Aman. As we write this piece, the world anticipates the results of the Oscar nominations. Rahman is being celebrated and written about, for putting our country on the global film map. Whether he bags the coveted statuette or not, Rahman will continue to be the composer who made music successful for Indian films. ●

SMILES!

is superstitiously held as a sign of good luck! Smile Pinkie breaks this myth.

Prasanna's happiness doubles because the Oscar nominee A.R.Rahman is his good friend and the guitarist has worked for him in many successful films. Prasanna is a much sought after artiste in his profession and has performed Carnatic music concerts on the guitar while in India. "Now, how would that sound?" we may ask. "My one month old daughter loves it," laughs a happy Prasanna.

"Music makes all children happy and they must learn some music, no matter what genre it might belong to," is Prasanna's earnest message to Gokulam readers.

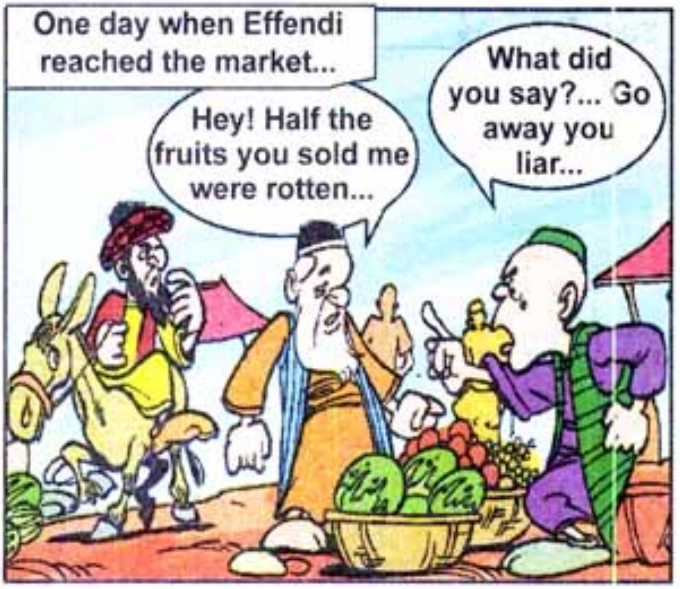
- S.R

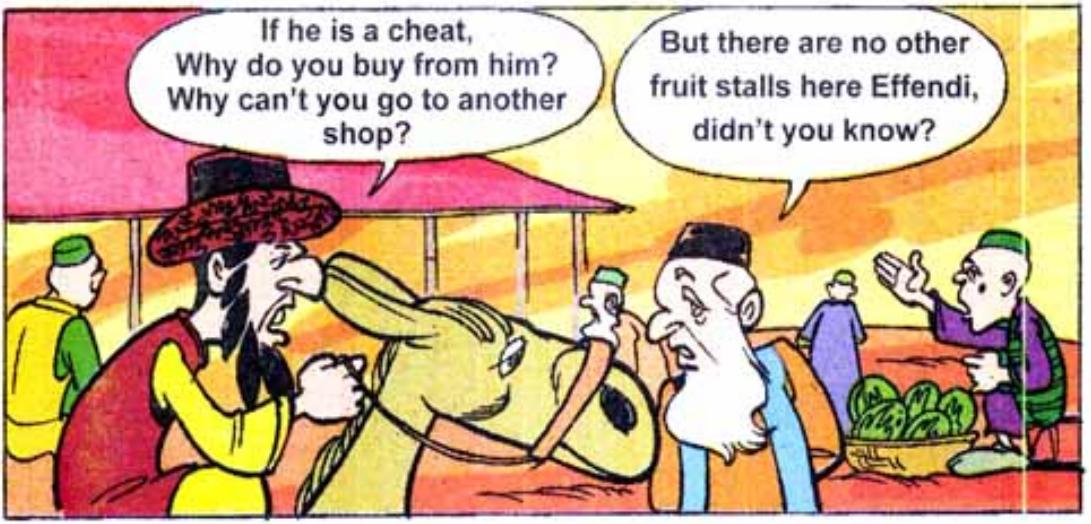
(Turn this page over for a poster of Rahman and Prasanna)

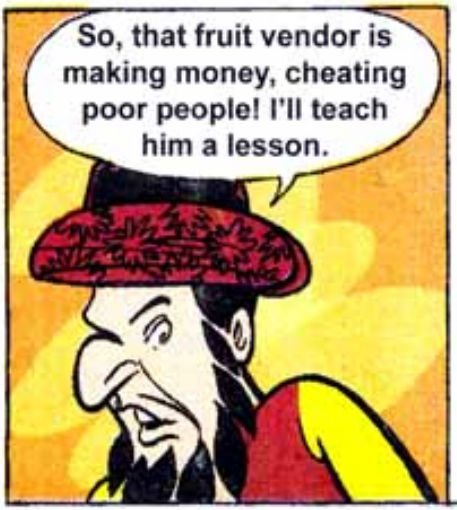
GOKULAM

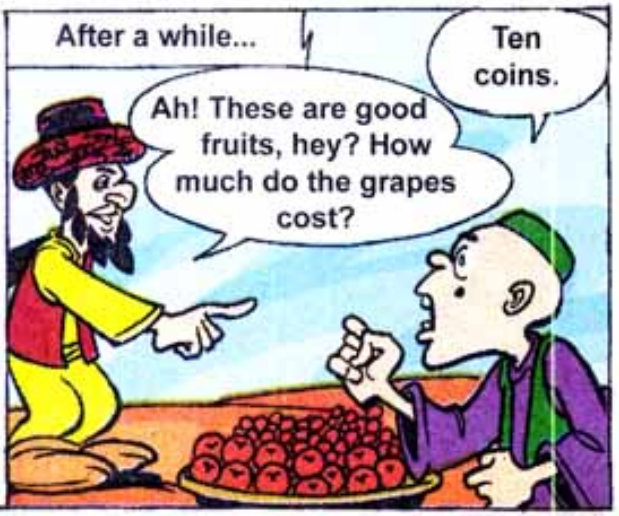
POSTER

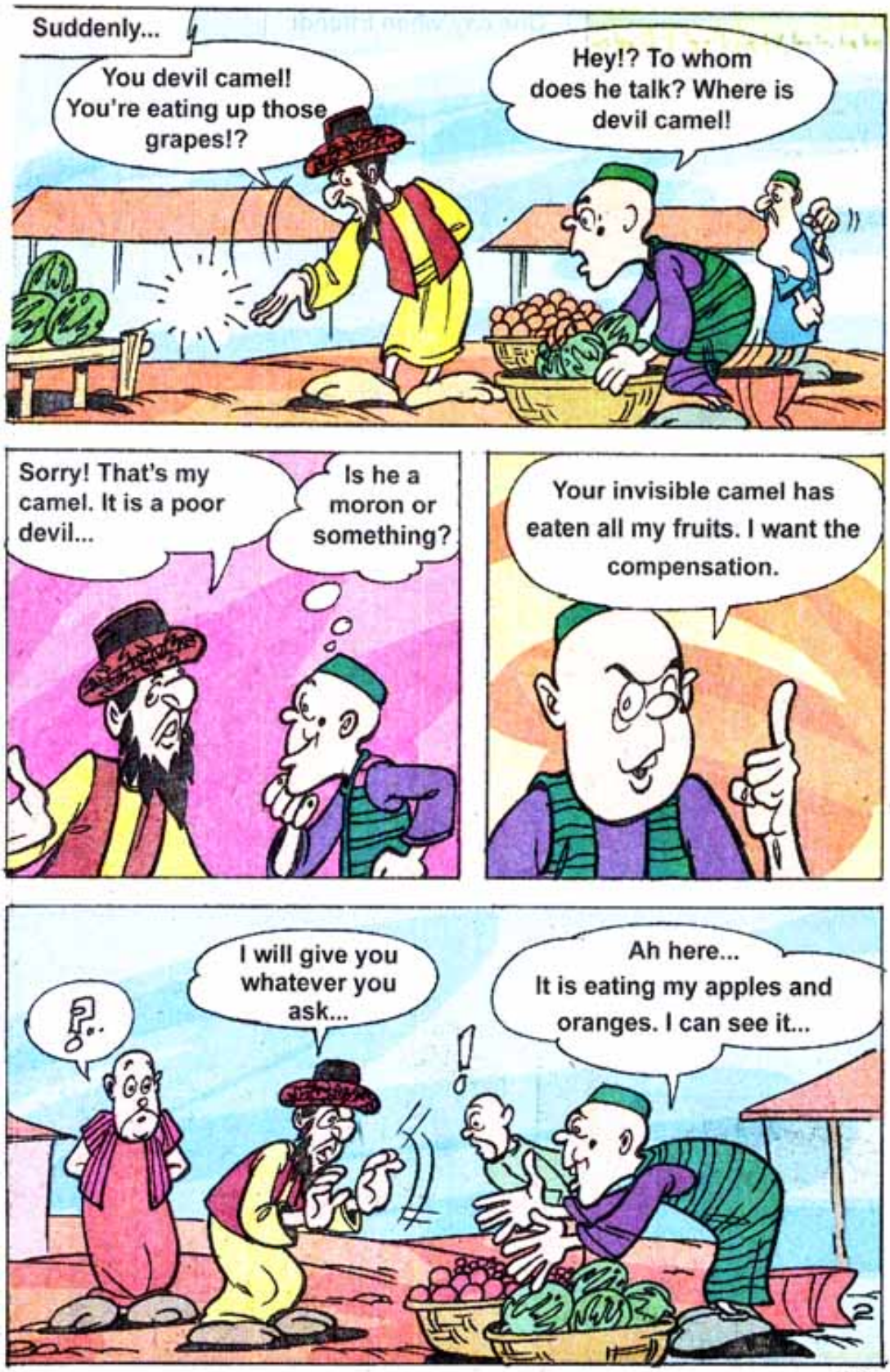
EFFENDI TALES
DEVIL CAMEL

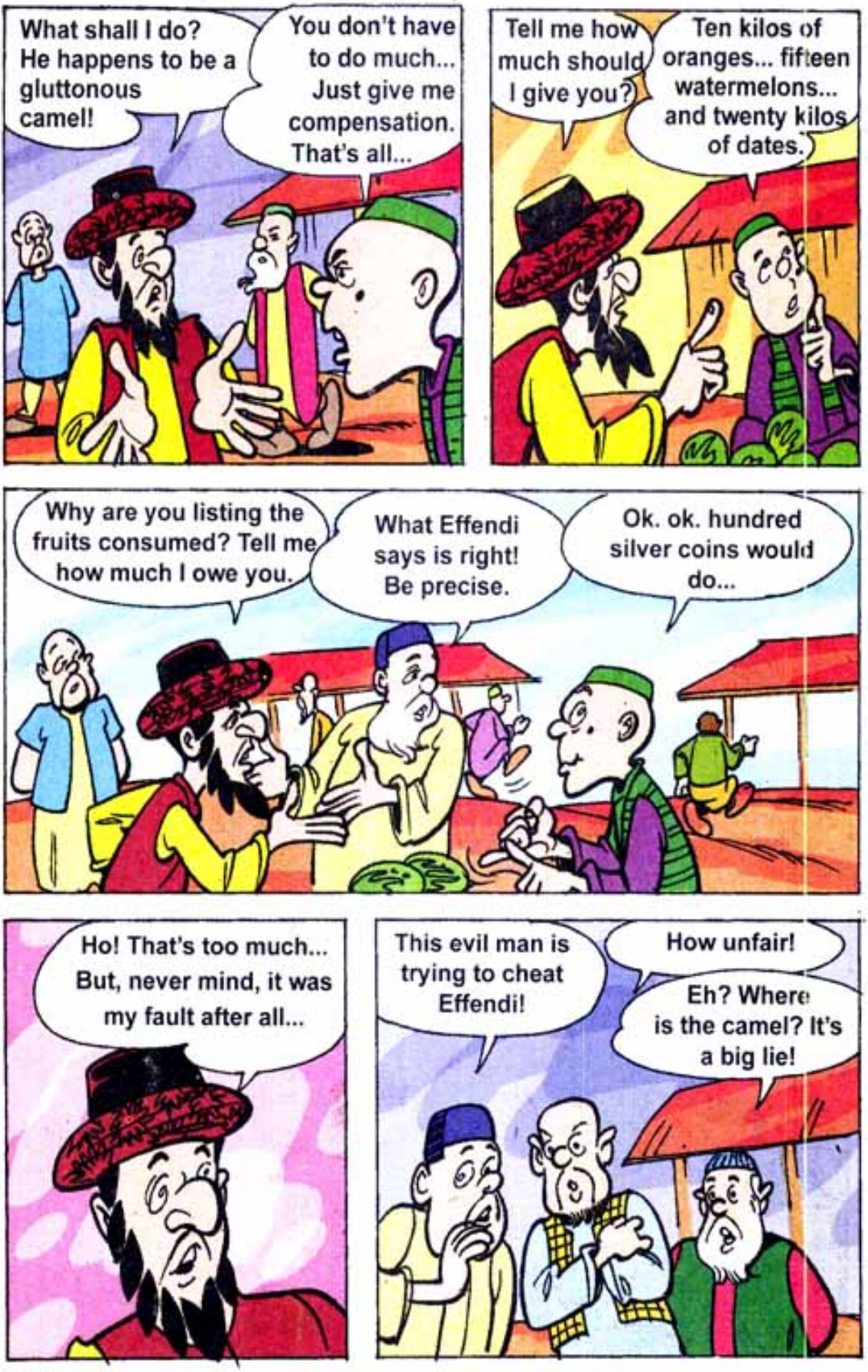

One day when Effendi reached the market...
Hey! Half the fruits you sold me were rotten...
What did you say?... Go away you liar...

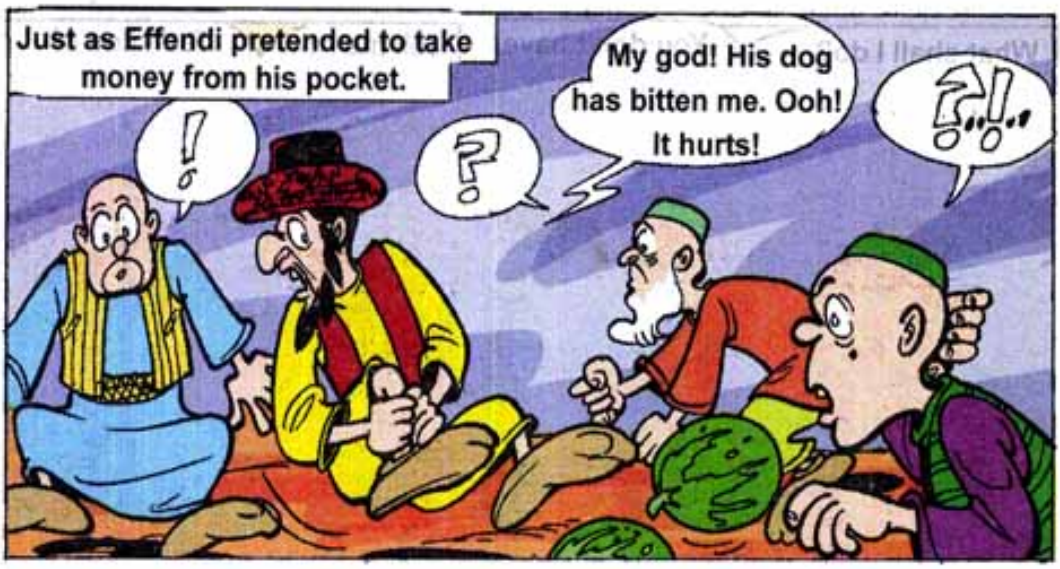

If he is a cheat, Why do you buy from him? Why can't you go to another shop?
But there are no other fruit stalls here Effendi, didn't you know?


So, that fruit vendor is making money, cheating poor people! I'll teach him a lesson.


After a while...
Ah! These are good fruits, hey? How much do the grapes cost?
Ten coins.


Suddenly...
You devil camel! You're eating up those grapes!?
Hey!? To whom does he talk? Where is devil camel!
Sorry! That's my camel. It is a poor devil...
Is he a moron or something?
Your invisible camel has eaten all my fruits. I want the compensation.
?..
I will give you whatever you ask...
!
Ah here... It is eating my apples and oranges. I can see it...

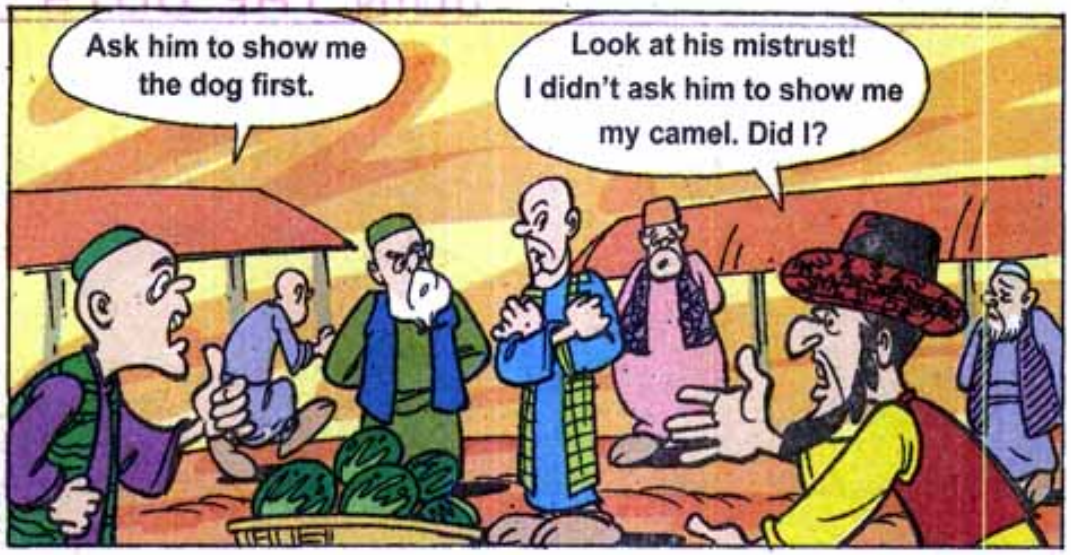

What shall I do? He happens to be a gluttonous camel!
You don't have to do much... Just give me compensation. That's all...
Tell me how much should I give you?
Ten kilos of oranges... fifteen watermelons... and twenty kilos of dates.
Why are you listing the fruits consumed? Tell me how much I owe you.
What Effendi says is right! Be precise.
Ok. ok. hundred silver coins would do...
Ho! That's too much... But, never mind, it was my fault after all...
This evil man is trying to cheat Effendi!
How unfair!
Eh? Where is the camel? It's a big lie!

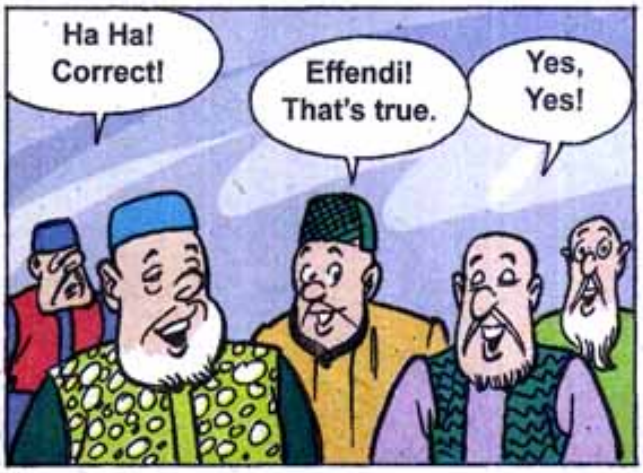

Just as Effendi pretended to take money from his pocket.
!
?
My god! His dog has bitten me. Ooh! It hurts!
?!..

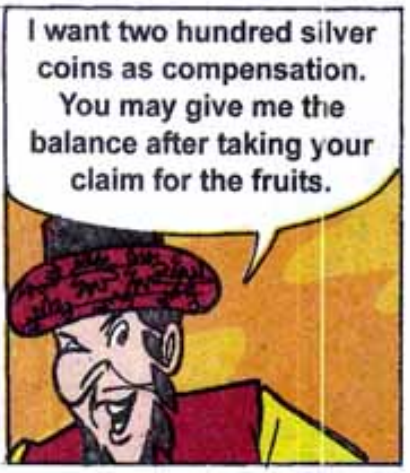
Dog? But I don't see any dog.
Don't you see it standing near the camel? That brown dog there.

You're lying! You cheat!
Who is lying? You are the liar! You imbecile!

I don't have a dog at all. What he says is utter nonsense!
See! I'm ready to give compensation for the fruits eaten by my camel. But did you hear what he said? Oh, wise men! Please mediate.







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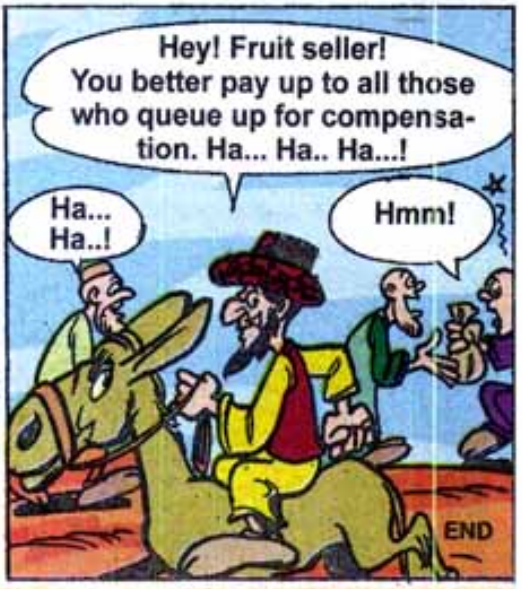

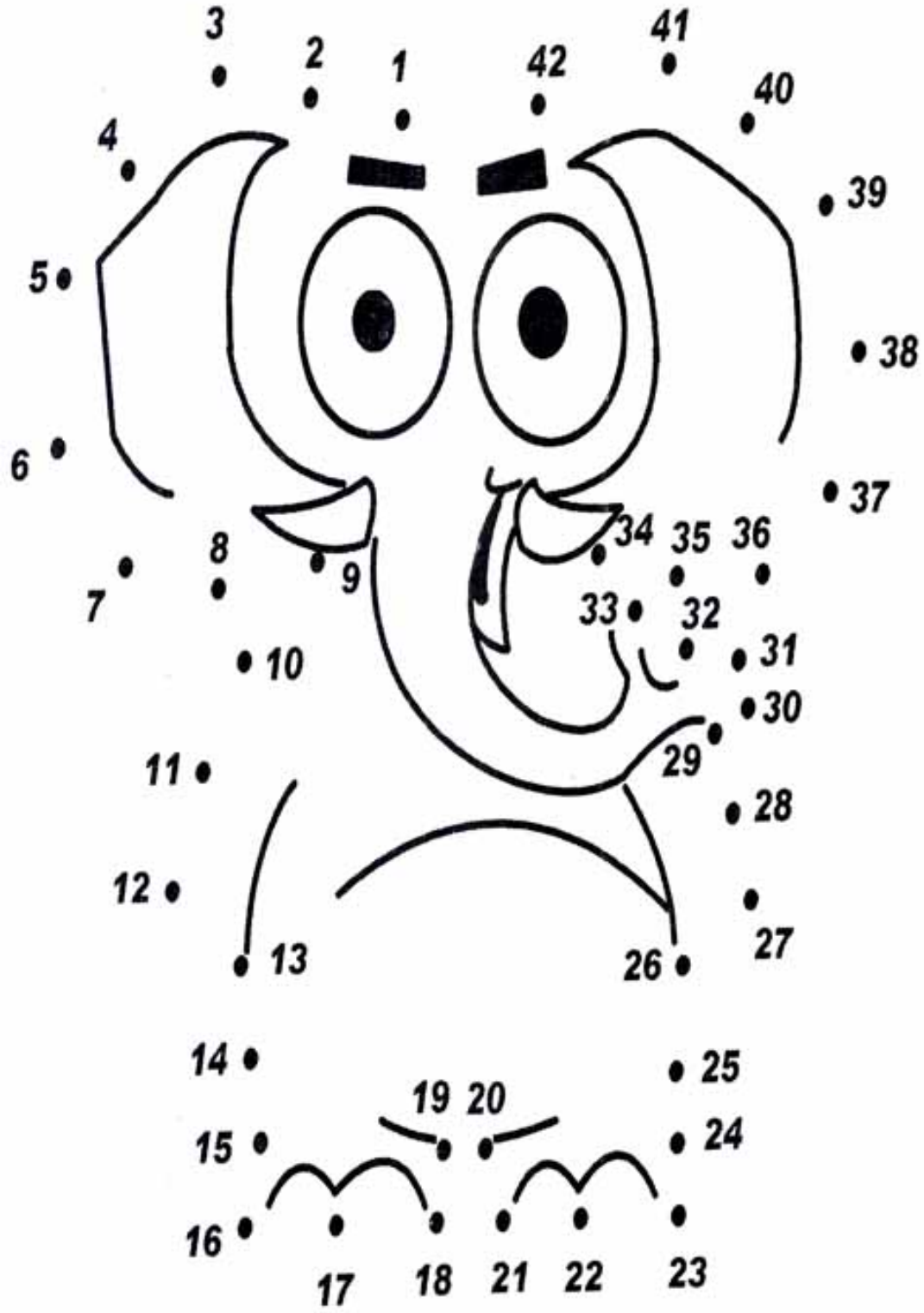
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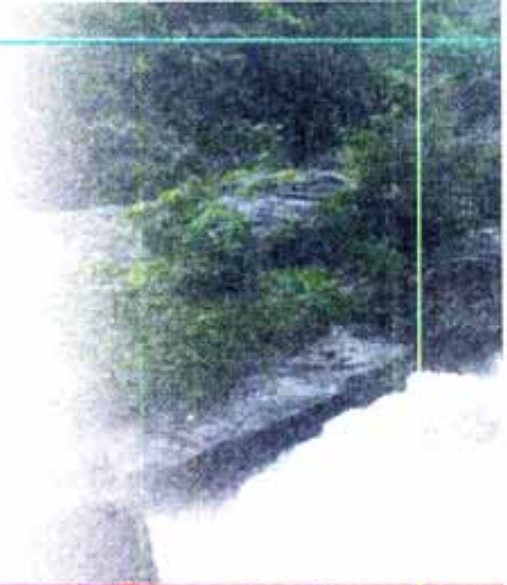
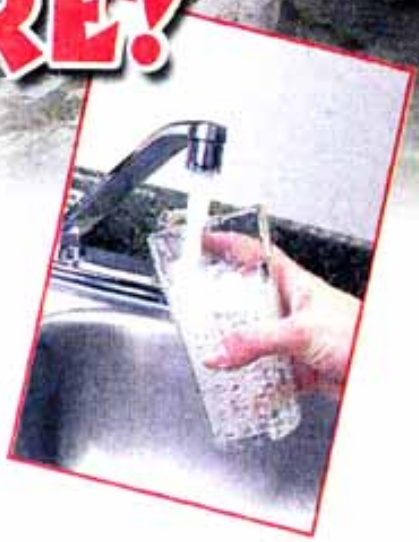


WORLD'S

Every year 22nd March is celebrated as World Water Day. We all know how important water is, in our day-to-day living. Here are some fantastic and amazing facts about water which, friends I would like to share with you all.

- Upto 70% of earth's surface is surrounded by water. But unfortunately out of it 97% of water is too salty for drinking or irrigation.
- Out of the usable 3% water, more than 75% is frozen as ice caps and glaciers. So, only 0.5% water is available for human consumption, which we get from ground water aquifers, rivers, lakes and streams.
- Another interesting fact is that a human being requires approximately four litres of water for drinking. However, to meet food needs, one requires 2,000 to 5,000 litres of water!
- An alarming fact is that, most diseases are caused by water contamination. Cholera, typhoid, diarrhoea are some waterborne diseases. Diseases like scabies, trachoma, etc., are caused by lack of bathing water.
- Amazing steps are taken to treat salt water so as to make it available for drinking. Approximately 11,000 desalination plants are installed in 120 countries, out of which 60% are in the Middle East.
- To produce one pound of potatoes, 3,750 litres of water is required. One ton of the produce requires, 1,000 tons of water. Astonishing!!

TREASURE!



- Agriculture is a major polluter of water resources.
- Last, but not the least, barely twenty years from now, more than half of the world's population will not have enough water to meet, even its basic needs.

So come, let us all join hands to use water economically.

"Every drop of water counts"

(Source : Book of General Knowledge Facts)

- M.G.Manjari, Std.IX,
Montfort Centenary Academy
Matric School, Kanchipuram.

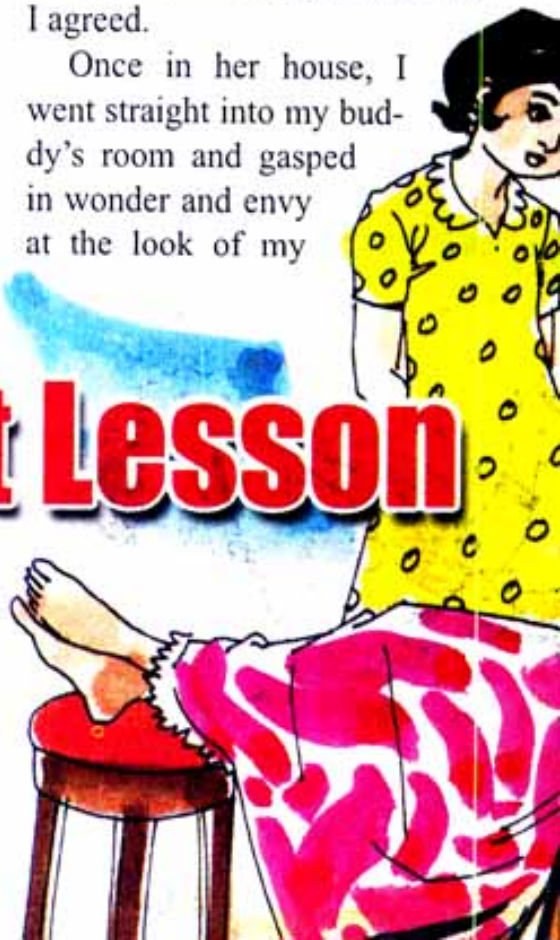
My First Lesson

I was six years old. We were going to celebrate Christmas at school and everyone was expected to bring flowers for their teachers. I had forgotten all about it and had remembered just a day before the event. Well, when I told my mom that I needed a bunch of flowers the next day, she told me that she wasn't feeling very well and couldn't go out to buy them. She asked me to take whatever I liked from the garden and bring it to her, so as to make a bouquet with it.

Okay, let's face it. This definitely wasn't the answer I had been expecting. I thought that as soon as I told her about it, she would be on her toes, looking for the perfect bouquet at the florist's and bring it home for me. I was really upset, but since she did look ill, I didn't object or argue. I went out and inspected the garden, but was disappointed here again. All I could see were a few roses of the same colour, (my mother's pride), but to me, they were just a small bunch of useless flowers. I wanted to cry out loud. I had heard my friends discussing about the kind of flowers they'd get, and trust me, what they spoke about was way beyond the common red roses of my garden. I took one, and wanted to crush it, but hurt my finger on a thorn.

I ran back into the house, crying. I didn't want my mother to see me that way, and so tiptoed upstairs to my bedroom. Wanting to divert my mind, I called my best friend, Sheena. However, she did not help matters, and asked me to come over to her place to see the beautiful bouquet she would take to school. Not wanting to hurt her, I agreed.

Once in her house, I went straight into my buddy's room and gasped in wonder and envy at the look of my



friend's bouquet. As I had expected, her flowers would make mine look like they had grown in a drain. I was still thinking about what I was going to do, but when Sheena asked me what I would be wearing for the big event, I forgot all about it and began planning. We talked and talked for about an hour, deciding what to wear, and how I would bring my Barrie bear, and she, her Rosie bearess, (well, we weren't exactly the best when it came to grammar!), and so on and so forth. But then my mother rang up, and told me to reach home before dark, and it was time to leave.

As Sheena went inside to get her bicycle keys; I looked around the living room. I had never really appreciated how well decorated the room was, partly because I usually entered their house through the back door, and partly because the two of us had more important things to discuss than the interior decorations of the place. However I did notice today that the room was filled with beautiful flowers, either in vases, or in bouquets. Though they were made of synthetic material they seemed so natural; in short, they were awesome. As I was looking at them, a feeling arose inside me, something I had never felt.

Thinking of it practically, I needed the flowers more than their living room. And anyway, the place was so full of them that one wouldn't notice if a few were missing, I thought, trying to justify what I was going to do. And I can always gift some flowers to Sheena on her birthday, so what if it was eight months from now. So, I decided to take some of them before my friend came back. Honestly, I didn't realize that what I was doing was wrong. I guess I was too young for it, but somewhere in my mind, I realized that Sheena, wouldn't ap-

prove of me touching her mom's beloved flowers. So, after taking my pick, I hid it in my bag and waited innocently for her to return.

The two of us rode back home on our bicycles. I went inside, feeling elated. After putting the flowers together, I felt that I had the best bouquet in the world. When my mom asked me about making one, I just told her she needn't worry, it was all arranged. She gave me a curious look, and retired to her bedroom, glad that she wouldn't need to stay up any longer. I left the flowers on the couch and went upstairs to dress up. Now that everything was perfect, I needed to look perfect too. Just as I had finished, I heard the bell downstairs. Since mother was resting, I had to open the door. It was Sheena's mom who had come to meet my mother and ask her how she was feeling. No sooner did I let her in, than to my shock, I noticed the flowers lying there. It didn't take long for Sheena's mom to notice them too, and what happened after that can as well be imagined.

Birthday Bash! MARCH

Ritunjay celebrates his 7th birthday on 05.03.2009. Wish you many more happy returns of the day. May God shower his blessings for all the years to come.

- Wishes from
Amma, Baba, Mom and Dad

My brother **S.Ranjith** celebrates his 12th birthday on March 30th. I wish him a happy and prosperous birthday.

- Best wishes from
Mani (brother), Advaith and Aaradith (cousins), Mom, Dad, Uncle, Aunt and family

Well, I wouldn't like to recall everything that occurred, but all I can say is that I would never want to relive that moment again. My mother spanked me and told me to go and stay in my room. If this is bad, the worse was yet to come. What I dreaded the most was what my dad was going to do when he found out that his daughter had been stealing. Surprisingly, he didn't say anything; in fact, he didn't even talk to me. This was not a good sign. I would have rather had him scream at me than keep his silence. I was grounded for a fortnight. Forget the celebrations, and the clothes, I wasn't even allowed to go to school. My mom soon forgave me, but my dad didn't speak to me for a whole week. It was obvious that I had disappointed him, and broken his trust in me. What was worse, even Sheena, my best friend didn't utter a word. I felt miserable. I had lost the trust of almost everyone I knew, my parents, my best friend, the whole household (well, except my maid, who still trusted me for not telling my mom that she had been 'borrowing' butter from our kitchen.), but otherwise, everyone.

As time went by, things got back to normal. Dad started talking to me again, and so did Sheena. Everyone forgot about the matter and even if someone remembered, it wasn't mentioned again in front of me. However, no matter how much time passes, I can never forget the day when I had tried to take someone else's stuff without asking, for I had learnt my lesson. A lesson taught to me by a bouquet of flowers.

- A.S.Gomathi, Std.IX,
Sacred Heart Convent School,
Jamshedpur

AHEAD!

B.Vignesh turns 11 on 26.03.2009. May God bless him with long life, excellent health and exemplary character.

- Parents
S.Baskar
and
B.Jayachithra

Will Shampoo

- **G.Sree Vandana, Chennai-37**

I am 14 years old. Why do I get white patches on my face?

It may be due to fungal infection. Or it could be due to deficiency of Vitamin E. I would advise you to consult a dermatologist (skin doctor). At times even worms in the stomach may be the reason for facial white patches.

There is a disorder called leucoderma. It causes patches of discolouration on the skin. The pigment cells of a body are destroyed by the body itself, in a leucoderma patient. When this happens, the affected area turns white. The reason for leucoderma is not known. However it is considered that genetic factors, exposure to chemicals or infections like syphilis and leprosy could cause leucoderma.

- **Bhabani Shankar Mohanta, Bilaspur, Chattisgarh**

I am 11 years old. I suffer from cracks on both heels of my feet. It

Turn my Hair White?

has been over a year now and it is very painful. Please suggest a remedy.

Cracked heels are a common foot problem. They are generally caused by dry skin. For most people this is a nuisance and a cosmetic problem. But when the cracks are deep, they are painful to stand on and the skin can bleed. In severe cases it can also become infected.

Are you in the habit of walking barefoot outside your home? If so, avoid it. Always use proper footwear. Before going to bed, place your feet, for ten minutes, in warm water to which a little salt has been added. Regular scrubbing of heels will make the cracks disappear! Your doctor may prescribe you a suitable ointment.

- **Raveena Jayaraman, Mumbai**

My mother says that use of shampoo will cause the hair to turn white. Is this true?

No shampoo will make your

As told by Dr.N.A.JAYAVELAN to G.S.SUBRAMANIAN

hair white. However, inferior shampoos can damage your hair. Some shampoos, even the deemed superior ones, may cause allergic reactions to the user.

My suggestion is to use the 'natural shampoo', i.e. **Shikakai**. It is better than most of the shampoos available in the market.

- **Rohini, Chennai – 40.**

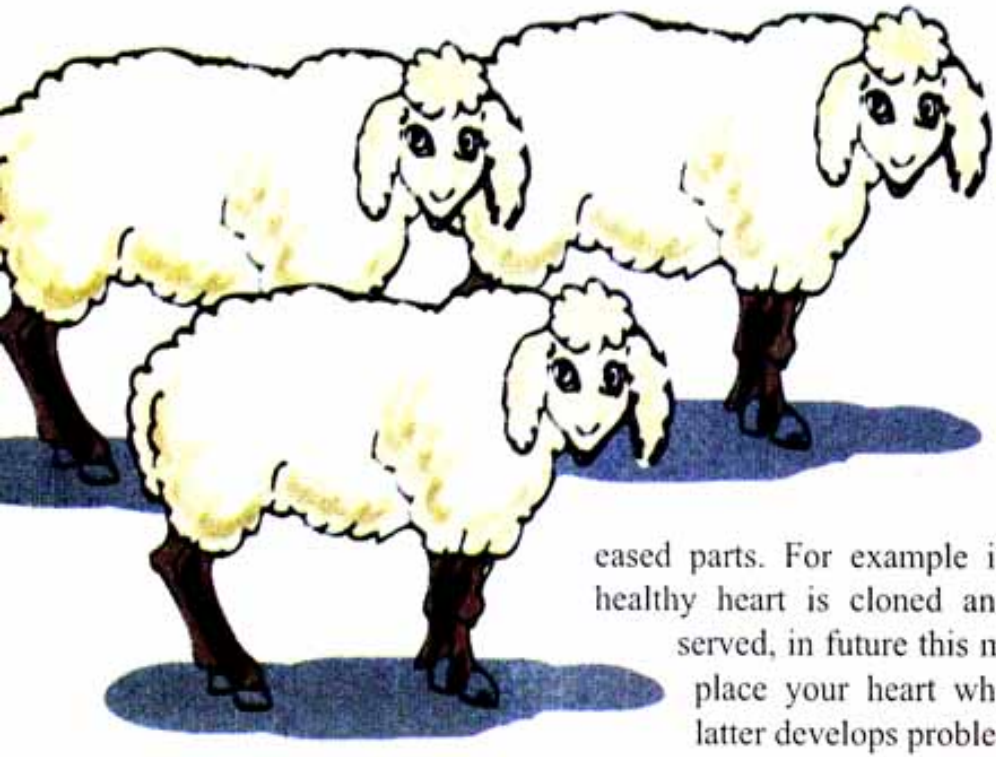
What is cloning? Please explain the term. Why has it been made illegal?

In biology, cloning means creating an organ or a whole animal which is genetically identical. This is made possible by transferring a nucleus from a donor adult cell (This cell is called somatic cell) to an egg which has no nucleus.

Though as early as in 1952 a tadpole was cloned, the first mammal which was successfully cloned was Dolly, an ewe. This was done in 1996. However the ewe died in 2003.

Researches for cloning of human beings are also going on, though they are in the initial stages. As cloning is against nature (a man and a woman are not needed for producing a child), this is opposed in many countries.

However, cloning may help in replacing certain defunct or diseased parts. For example if your healthy heart is cloned and preserved, in future this may replace your heart when the latter develops problems. ●



Zero-In - 8

Write the answers indicated by the clues in the boxes below. Now rearrange the circled letters within the boxes to zero-in on the final answer. You have a clue to help you with this too! Have fun!

1. The famous young lady of Indian tennis

2. Jawaharlal Nehru's daughter

3. Woman president of Israel

4. India's first lady IPS officer

5. Wife of Nelson Mandela

6. Actor and Miss World from Mumbai

Answer : Celebrated in the month of March

Fill in the form on the reverse of this page and send in your entries to Gokulam before 25.03.09

ZERO IN -6

1	B	A	B	Y	L	O	N		
2	S	E	P	T	E	M	B	E	R
3	T	H	U	R	S	D	A	Y	
4	J	A	N	U	S				
5	C	A	L	E	N	D	A	R	
6	A	N	N	O	D	O	M	I	N I

Answer :

J	U	L	I	U	S	C	A	E	S	A	R

Congratulations! Here are the winners of Zero-in-6 (January 2009) and the solutions as well. The results of Zero In - 7 will be published in the April 2009 issue.

1. **Mainak Chakraborty, Std.XII, St. Pauls School, Rourkela**
2. **D.Sandhya, Std.VIII, CSI Jessie Moses Mat. Hr. Sec. School, Chennai**
3. **Samuel George Varghese, Std.IV, Vidyalayam, CMC, Vellore**
4. **Ashwini A.Bhatt, Std.I, SSB English High School, Bengalooru**
5. **R.Arun, Std.V, Poorna Learning Centre, Bengalooru**

ZERO-IN - 8 Entry Form

Name : (Mr/Ms) .....

Age : ..... Class : .....

School : .....

*Residential Address : .....

..... Pin .....

Signature : .....

* Local address is a must for overseas entries.

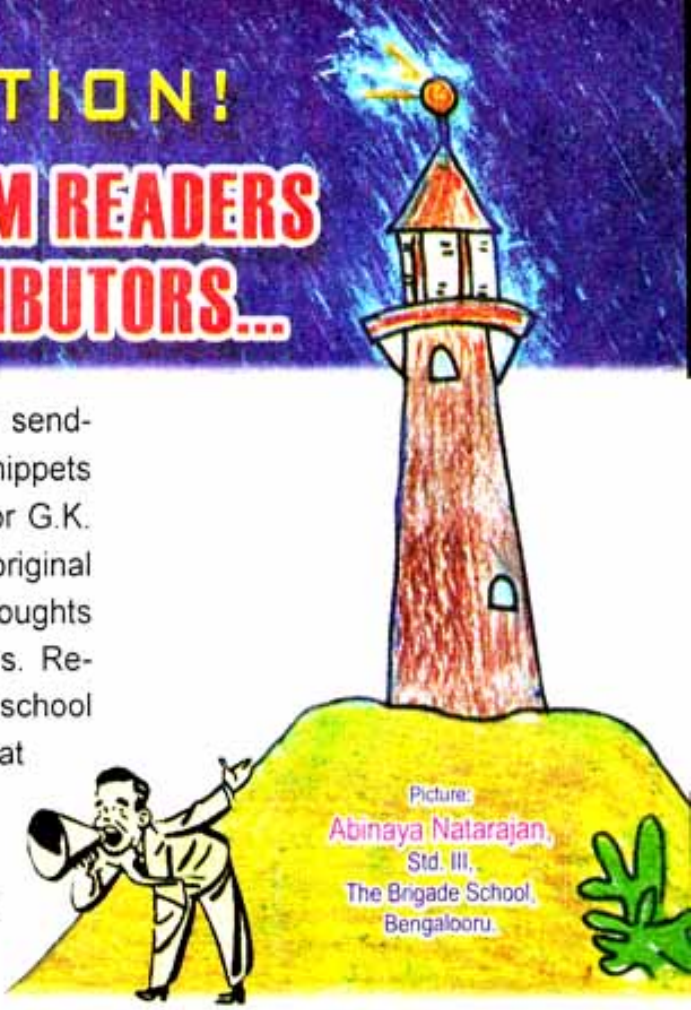
The Editor, Gokulam, Kalki Buildings,
47-NP, Jawaharlal Nehru Road, Ekkaduthangal, Chennai - 600 032.

● Strictly for school going children ● Five lucky winners will get a cash award of Rs.50/- each. They will be decided by a draw of lots from out of the all correct entries. ●Entries with solved puzzle on the reverse accepted on this form only ●No xerox copies.

Last Date : 25.3.2009

ATTENTION!

ALL GOKULAM READERS AND CONTRIBUTORS...



Most of you have been sending us jokes, facts and snippets gathered from the internet or G.K. books. Do show us how original you can be. Write your thoughts and ideas on various issues. Report funny happenings at school or home. Do make sure that you put down your name, age, class, school name and residential address individually on each and every contribution that you send to Gokulam.

★ The best ones will be published and a participation certificate will be sent to the contributor.

★ Please preserve your participation certificates. **In case you don't receive the certificates which are mailed to you by Gokulam, keep a xerox copy of your contribution in your collection. The contributor who collects the most number of certificates in a year (July 2008 to June 2009) will win a prize.**

★ All competition entries should reach us before the last date mentioned.

★ Entries to Birthday Bash column should reach us along with the appropriate message and photographs **two months before the birthday.**

★ Do be original in your contributions and creations. If you have based your writing on a source, be sure to acknowledge it and name it and...

NEVER EVER COPY!

Name : **T.D.Rayon**

Age : 11

Address : No.1/A, T-3, Prasanna Apartments, Sivaram Nagar Main Road, Thiruvanaikovil, Trichy - 5.

Hobbies : Chatting in the net, watching movies, going on picnics and tours, writing letters.

Name : **N.Vaishnavi Prabhata**

Age : 13

Address : 1-16-53/9, Sai Prashanthi Nivas, Sai Nagar Colony, Venkatapuram, Alwal, Secunderabad - 500 015.

Hobbies : Singing, listening to music, collecting flowers, watching nature.

Name : **Kaling Tekseng**

Age : 15

Address : Sainik School Imphal, Pangi Road, P.O. Box : 21, Manipur - 795 001.

Hobbies : Playing football, listening to music, swimming, shopping and reading.

Name : **K.Vaishnavi**

Age : 11

Address : 7-1-644/1, E.S.I. Plot No.8, Sundar Nagar, Hyderabad - 500 038.

Hobbies : Horse riding, reading books, singing, dancing, acting, listening to the radio and collecting stamps.

Name : **K.M.Sailakshmi**

Age : 13

Address : Sai Grace, Chittattukara PO., Thirussur, Kerala - 680 511.

Hobbies : Feeding animals, solving crossword puzzles, reading, drawing, stamp collection.

CHOOSE

Name : **Yoyam Bagang**

Age : 14

Address : C/o The Principal, V.K.V.Nivedita Vihar, Seijosa,

East Kameng, Arunachal Pradesh - 790 103.

Hobbies : Singing, dancing, reading novels.

Name : **Susmita Banra**

Age : 13

Address : Fs-Kz Flat, Block - 1, Room-1A, Sec-III, Tube Baridih, Jamshedhpur, Jharkhand - 831 017.

'WRITE'!

Hobbies : Philately, reading books, cycling, playing computer games, watching movies, nature watching.

Name : **M.Sathyaroopa**

Age : 12

Address : Std.VII, Kalaivani Kalvinilaiyam Matric. Scool, Thingalur, Gobi T.K., Tamilnadu.

Hobbies : Dancing, drawing, watching wildlife movies, spending time with my friends.

Name : **Vishal Mauuri**

Age : 14

Address : 4089, IX A Wodeyar House, Sainik School, Bijapur - 586 102.

Hobbies : Playing video games, singing, dancing, reading novels and surfing the net.

Name : **B.P.Sachidanand**

Age : 14

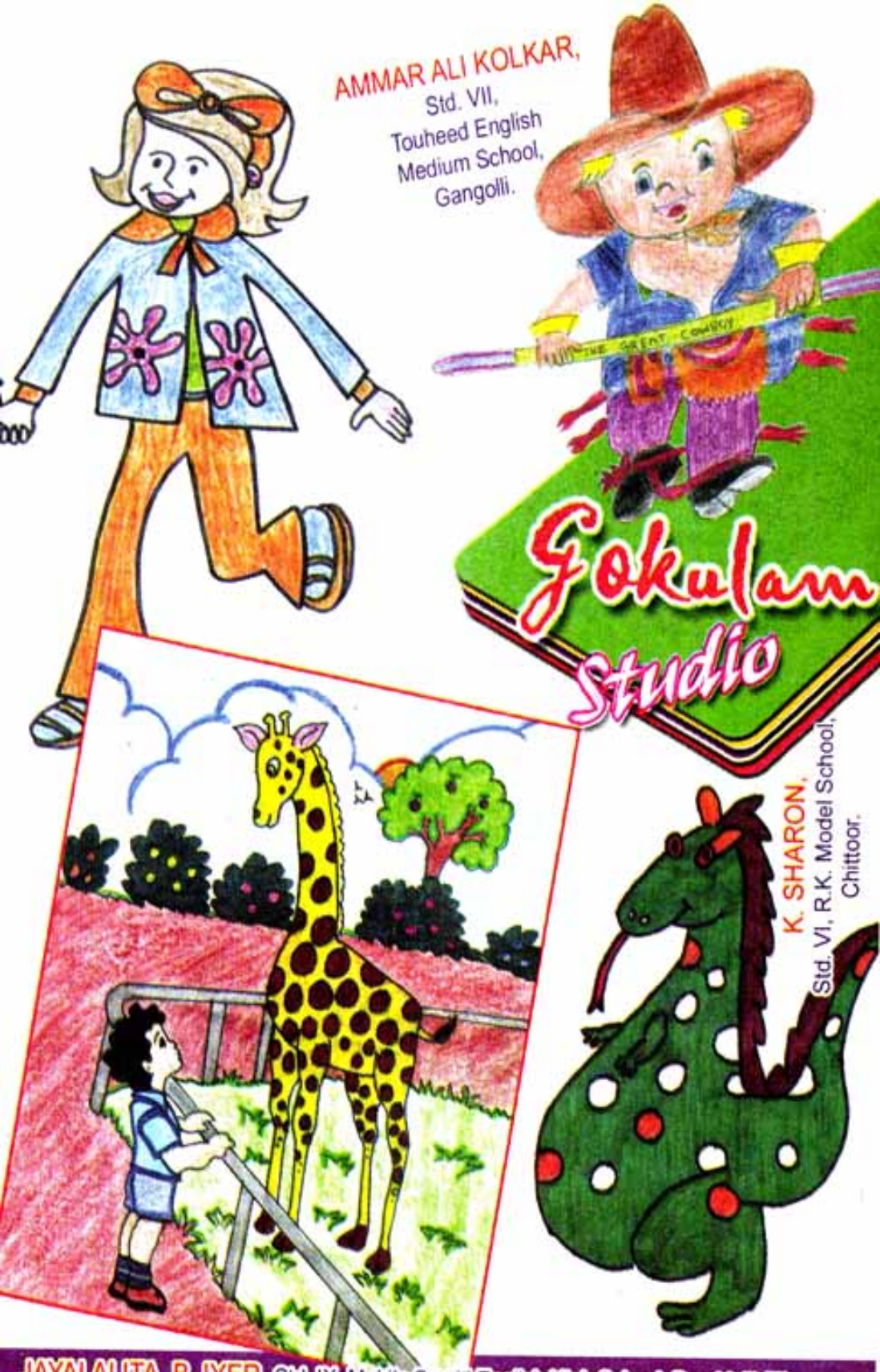
Address : 4044, IX B, Wodeyar House, Sainik School, Bijapur - 586 102.

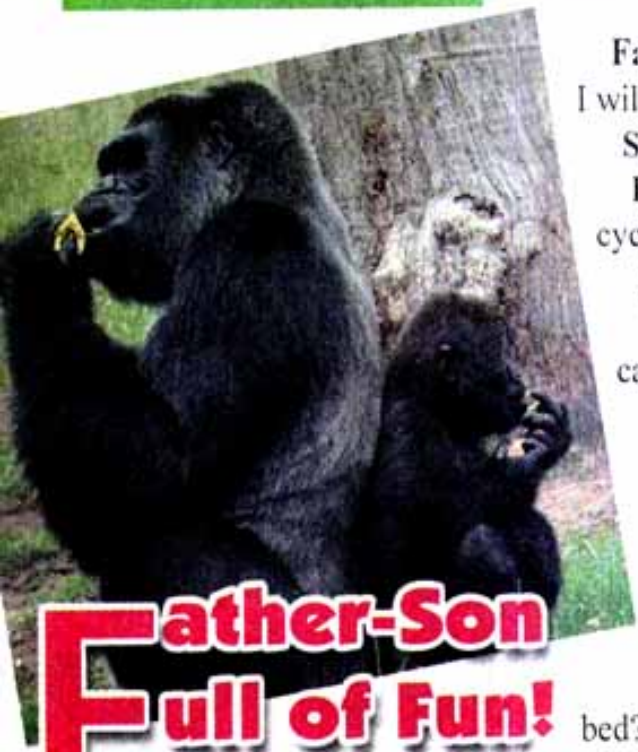
Hobbies : Horse riding, swimming, playing hockey and football, reading novels and listening to music.

G. VIJAYALAKSHMI,
Std. VI.
Evershine English School,
Bengalooru.

MEGHA S. KUMAR,
Std. VIII, Bishop Cotton Girls School,
Bengalooru.

R.S. AJITH, Std. VI, M.V.M. School, Hosur.


AMMAR ALI KOLKAR,
Std. VII,
Touheed English
Medium School,
Gangolli.
Gokulam
Studio
K. SHARON,
Std. VI, R.K. Model School,
Chittoor.
JAYALALITA. B. IYER, Std. IX, Mahila Samiti English High School, Dombivili (E).



Father-Son Full of Fun!

Father : If you pass the exam, I will buy you a cycle.

Son : And if I fail...?

Father : I will gift you ten cycles.

Son : What!

Father : Yes, so that you can run a cycle shop.

- Shreyank S. Kotian, Std.VI, Milagres Pre University College, Mangalore

Father : Why did you put a spider in your sister's bed?

Son : Because I couldn't find a frog!

Son : Pappa, Joseph is always beating me in the class. Please complain to the police.

Father : Why don't you complain to your class teacher?

Son : But, Joseph is my class teacher!

Father : Why are you taking your bicycle to bed?

Son : Because I don't want to walk in my sleep.

- V.Vaishali, Std.VII, Seetha Kingston HSS, Chennai

Son : Dad, please give a donation for our school swimming pool.

Father : OK, you can take a jug of water!

- A.Aswin Vayiravan, Std.IX, T.V.S.M.H.S.S., Madurai

Ram : My father is a uni-cellular organism.

Shyam : What do you mean..?

Ram : He has only one 'cell' phone!

- A.Balakumar, Age 12, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Madanapalle

Motivate, but Don't Compare!

"If you score more marks than your neighbour, I will buy you a gift - is this a healthy incentive?" *This was the question asked in the month of January. Our readers have overwhelmed us with their answers. Here is a collection of well-expressed views:*

Yes, I appreciate such offers of incentives because it encourages us to score more marks and when we get our gift, we feel enthused to do better in the exams to follow. Children love gifts.

- S.T.Sudarshan, Std.VI, Bhavan's Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya, Secunderabad, Sriram Venugopal, Std. IX, Chinmaya Vidyalaya, Trivandrum; Anusha Nair, Std.VII, Lokhandwala Foundation School, Mumbai; B.Varshaa, Std.IX, St.John's Senior Secondary School, Chennai; R.Rodrick Prashanth, Std.X, K.V., Chennai 54; R.Shruthi Laxmi, Std.IX, Mahatma Montessori MHSS, Madurai; S.Lakshmi, Std.IX, St.Thomas M.H.S.S., Chennai; Kishore Ram, Std.IX, Prince MHSS, Chennai; Sanjay Nayak, Std.V, Madhava-kripa School, Udupi

Actually this will help increase interest, competitiveness and rapport between neighbours. But make sure that the neighbour is a good student too!

- G.Varun, Std.IX, K.V., B.E.M.L. Nagar, Kolar; S.Ramya, Std.VI, Vailankanni Raj.M.H.S.S, Trichy; Nirmal, Std.VIII, P.S.B.S.S.S.,Chennai; Lilabati Mohanta, Std.IX, St.Francis S.S.S., Bilaspur, Chattisgarh

Nowadays children have too many distractions and such incentives will help them to get back to their studies and score more.

- Supraja.G, Std.IX, C.E.O.A, Madurai

Last year, I was not able to get first rank; but this year my parents offered me a bicycle and I worked hard to get the rank and the incentive.

- K.V.Ajay Ram, Std.V, Dilsuknagar Public School, Hyderabad

It is no doubt a competitive world, but we must study to gain knowledge and not expect gifts or be tempted by other offers. Is it not the duty of every student to do his/her best?

- K.Kirtisagar Sharma, Std.VII, St.Vincent's High School, Pune; M.Dilip Kumar,Std.VII, K.V., Island Grounds, Chennai

This kind of incentive offer will lead to psychological problems. We must compete with ourselves and not anybody else.

- K.Godha Reddy, Age 11, Hyderabad; Aishwarya Mohan, Std.XI, Sri Vidya Mandir H.S.S., Salem; R.Hari Harani, Std.IX, S.D.H.Jain Vidyalaya, Madurai; K.Naren, Std.VII, S.R.K.M.H.S.S, Salem

This is dangerous because the

child might overstretch himself and get into health problems. He may even be tempted to cheat. It may also cause the child to become nervous and lose marks.

- M.K. Sahaya Michel Rosetta, Std.VIII, Velammal M.H.S.S., Chennai; K.H.Jagashree, Std.VI, Holy Angels ISC School, Trivandrum

Offer incentives in the right spirit,

but don't compare with another child.

- S.Aafiya Thasneem, Std.VIII, C.J.M.H.S.S, Erode; J.Sriram, Std.X, K.V., IIT, Chennai; Mohammed Nizam Babu K., Std.X, Rajagiri Public School, Aluva; K.Sumitra, Std.XII, K.V., (SAC), Ahmedabad; Haritha Pavithran, Std.IX, Bhaktavatsalam Vidhyashram Chennai; Sai Abhay Chakravarthi, Std.IV, D.A.V. Public School, Hyderabad; M. Sathyaroopa, Std.VII, Kalaivani Kalvi Nilayam MHS, Thingalur

This is not the best way to boost a child. He or she may study only for the sake of the gift and not to improve knowledge. The parents must rather help the child to score better marks, than compare him with another. Topping the class or bettering oneself is in itself a source of happiness and the gift is nothing when compared to this.

- R.Aishwarya, Std.IX, Adarsh Vidyalaya M.H.S.S., Chennai; E.Shanthi, Std.XI, Subbiah Vidyalayam Girls H.S.S, Thoothukkudi; S.Venkatakannan, Std.VII, The Hindu Senior Secondary School, Chennai; V.Rajagopal, Std.VIII, Ahlcon Public School, New Delhi; S.Lakshmi, Std.VI, Atomic Energy Central School, Kaiga township; Benaka.G, Std.VI, Glowingstar Integrated School, Udupi; Snusha.L.S., Jyothi Kendriya Vidyalaya, Bengalooru; Ammar Ali Kolkar, Std.VII, Touheed English Medium School, Gangolli, (Karnataka); S.Dharani, Std.VII, Kamal Niketan Montessori School, Trichy; Pranav Siddharth, Std.VI, Sri Akilandeswari Vidyalaya, Trichy

Such offers may lead to jealousy and hatred among children who are otherwise good friends. It may cause inferiority complex and spoil their future. Moreover, the circumstances under which the children study and the standards of their schools may very too.

- N.Akilandeswari, Std.IX, Vyasa Vidyalaya Matriculation, Chennai; Jeeta Dash, Std.VII, St.Xavier's High School, Bhubaneshwar; Sneha, Std. VIII, Avila Convent M.H.S.S., Coimbatore;Neha Jha, Std.XI, Ramadevi Women's College, Bhubaneswar; Krishna Mehta, Ahmedabad; B.Kingsley, Std.X, K.V., Hubli; Raga.G., Std.VII, Tejasvi Vidyaranya, Nacharam, (A.P.); C.Manjusha, Std.X, Air Force School, Pune; J.Priscilla Nishi, Std.VIII, L.O.V.E. School, Yercaud

QUESTION FOR THE MONTH :

"Should children be sent to summer camps during the holidays?"

Send us your views by 25.03.2009. Each published entry will receive a prize of Rs. 25/-. Remember to include details of your age, class, school and residential address. Those of you who are non- residents of India should send us a local (Indian) address too. You can send entries by post or by e.mail (gokulam@kalkiweekly.com)

"I want a Patiala Churidar like my neighbour's" – if a child can make such demands of his parents, why can't the parents demand that their child betters the neighbours' performance?

- Yazhini Anbumani, Std.IX, Kalaimagal Kalvi Nilayam M.S., Erode

Each student has his own strength and should never be compared with another. Securing marks over a neighbour does not ensure a bright future.

- S.Srishnath, Std.XI, CEOA MH.S.S., Madurai; Meera V.Pai, Std.IX, A.J.Dc. Almeida High School, Ponda, Goa

I will not appreciate such offers because each child has ability and under pressure he may get ahead of his neighbour by just one mark and win the prize but it may not be a sign of progress. If he gets ahead of himself by 25 percent it would be great.

- Barsha Naik, Std.VIII, The Assembly of God Church School, Kolkata

This kind of offer makes it seem as if the parents are jealous of their neighbours' children and want their own children to always be first. It is not good.

- Jani Jude, Std.VI, Jyoti Nilayam HSS, Trivandrum

Does this offer mean that the parents are hungry for marks and the children are longing for gifts? The whole purpose of education is lost.

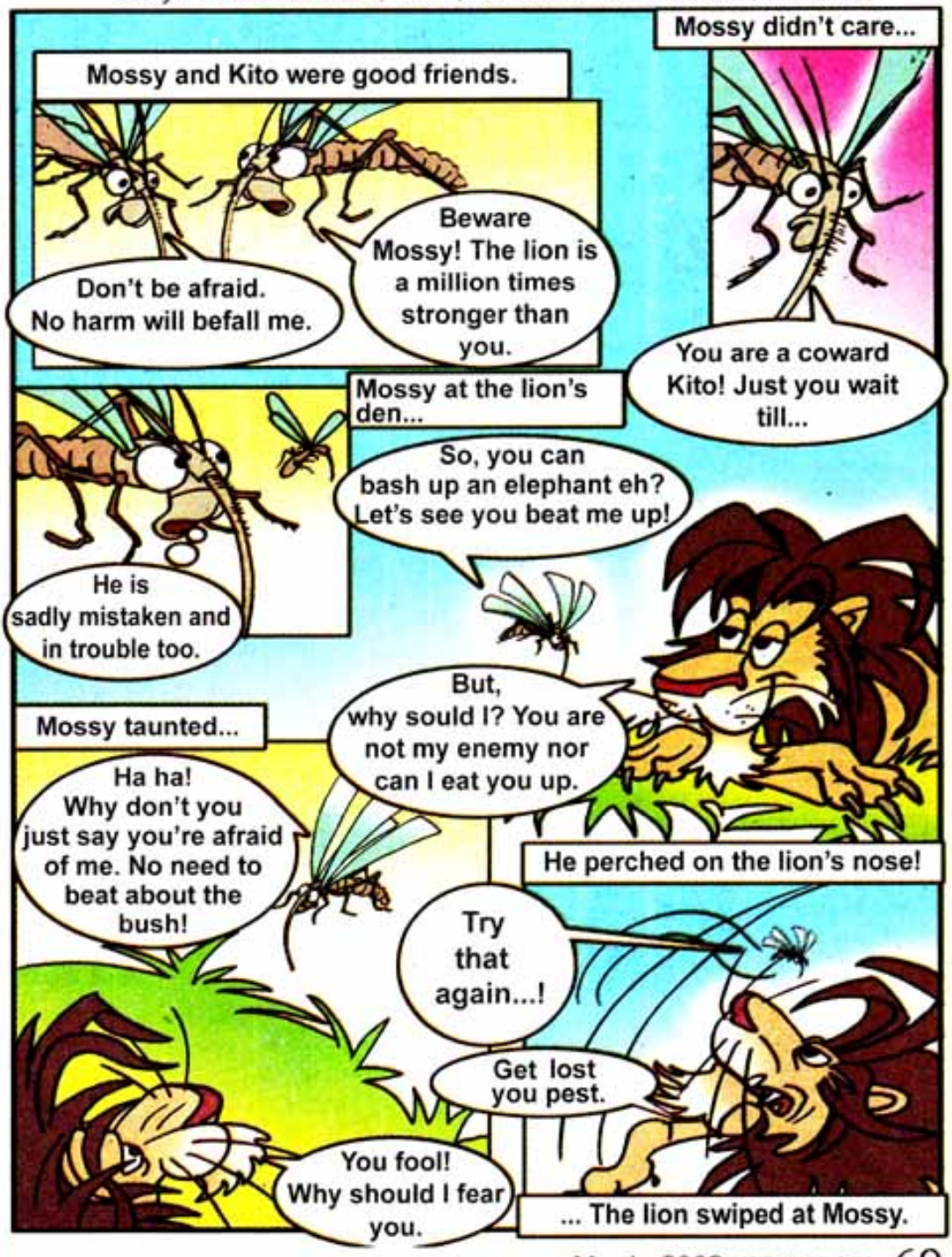
- Aswati Anil Warrier, First PUC, MES College, Bengalooru

This kind of promise amounts to bribery. It is wrong.

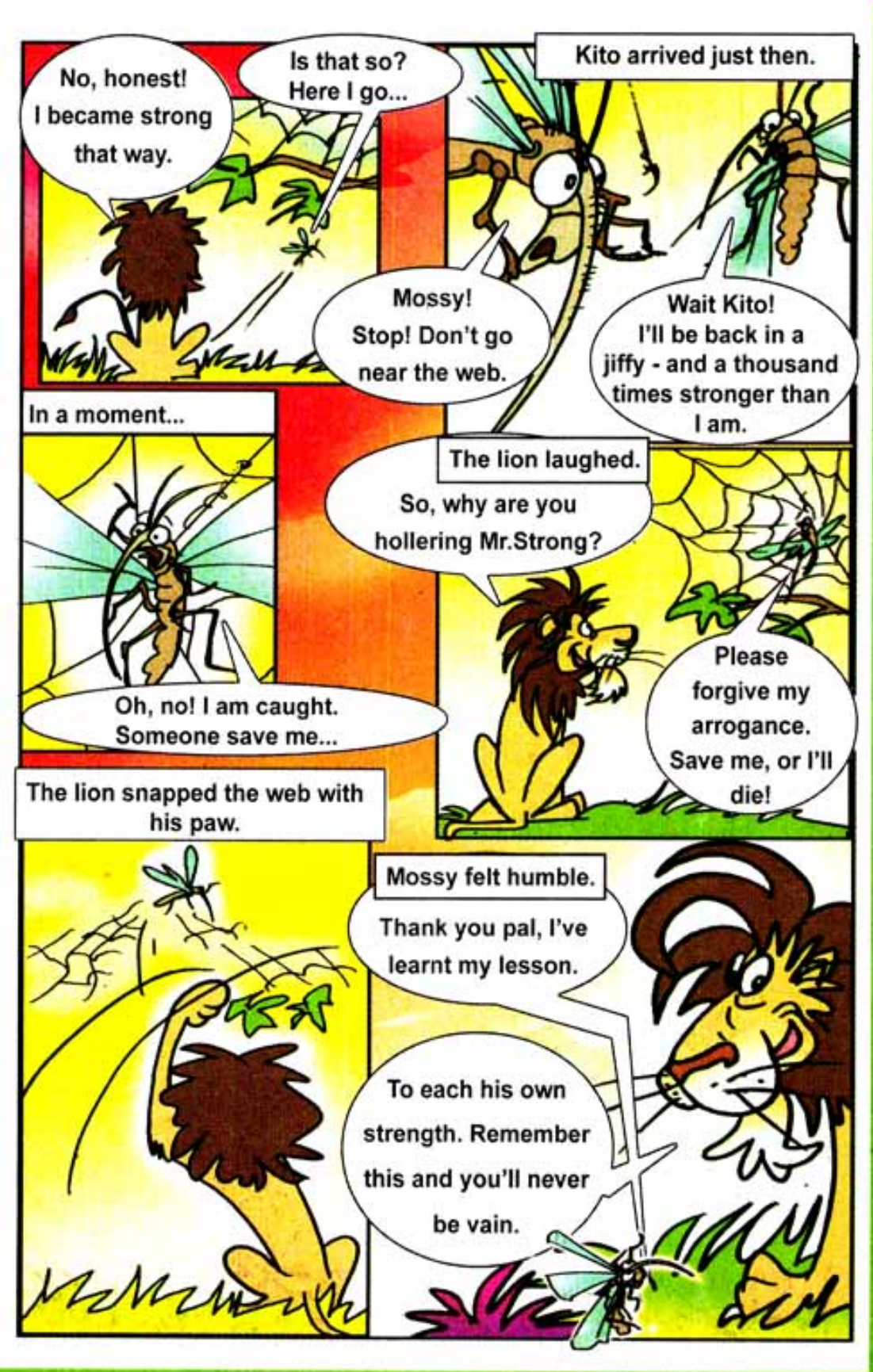
- B.Sathya, San Jose, California; Namitha Nagaraju, Std. VII, Sri Kaman's Children's Home, Bengalooru; Anirudh Rajaseshan, Std. XI, Indian High School, Dubai; S.S.Harish Kumar, Std.VIII, Golden Gates M.H.S.S, Salem

Mossy's Misadventure!

Pictures : Dharma
Story : P. Mukundan, Std V, Sitadevi Garodia School, Chennai.



... But missed and slapped his own nose!
Get me if you can. Am perched on your ear!
Ow, it hurts! Stop biting.
Why do you do this to me?
Cool it man! Even the elephants fear you, don't they?
Mossy teased.
Tell me, what is it your're looking for?
He then pointed at a spider's web.
Accept that I am stronger than you and I'll stop troubling you.
Yes, but on one condition.
The lion pondered for a while.
What is it? Tell me soon... I must get back to Kito and tell him I've won.
Simple. Just fetch me a strand from that cobweb.
Because the strand can turn you into an invincible hero!
You're kidding!
But, why would you need that?


No, honest! I became strong that way.
Is that so? Here I go...
Kito arrived just then.
Mossy! Stop! Don't go near the web.
Wait Kito! I'll be back in a jiffy - and a thousand times stronger than I am.
In a moment...
The lion laughed.
So, why are you hollering Mr.Strong?
Oh, no! I am caught. Someone save me...
Please forgive my arrogance. Save me, or I'll die!
The lion snapped the web with his paw.
Mossy felt humble.
Thank you pal, I've learnt my lesson.
To each his own strength. Remember this and you'll never be vain.

Glittering Gift Box

You need :

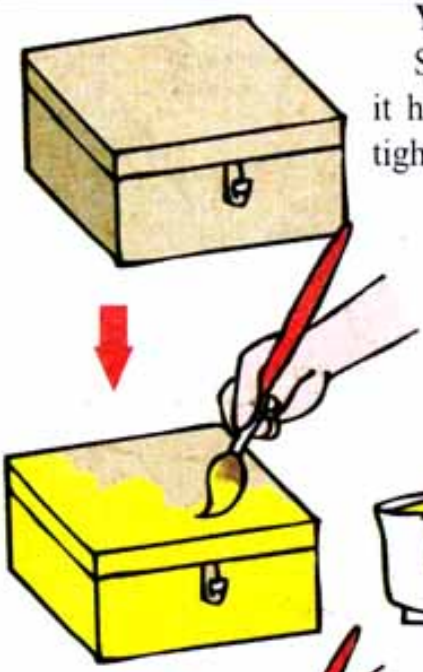
Small wooden box (available at craft stores – it has a hinged lid with a small clasp to close tight.)

Acrylic paint (or stain) and brush

Tacky glue

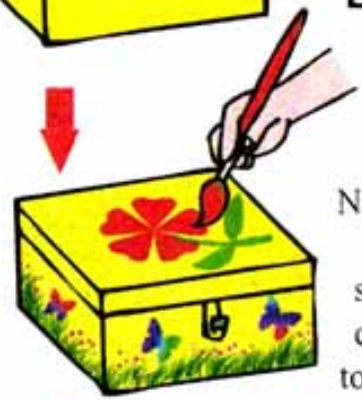
Assorted decorating supplies (stamps, plastic stickers, magazine pictures, photos, labels, etc)

Non toxic acrylic seals



Method :

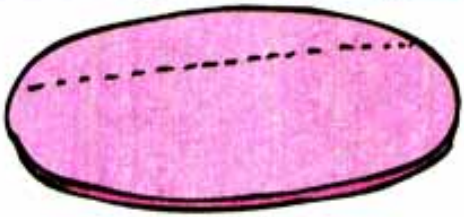
First apply a light coat of paint or coloured stain to the box. While it is drying, pick a theme for the decoration, such as, wild life, flowers or cars. You may choose the theme depending on whom the box is going to be gifted to. If it is a friend who loves Nature, you could select flowers or trees.



After the paint dries, glue on to the outer surface of the box, select pieces of decoration, carefully arranging them along the sides and top as a colourful collage. When finished, brush on a coat of the acrylic sealer to the whole thing. Now, you may fix a small plastic toy or a ping pong ball on the centre of the lid, for extra effect.

This box is ideal for keeping your trinkets, ear rings etc. Older people can use it as a cash box or a box to hold change.

- K.Keerthana, Std.X, S.V.Union High School, Pune



Decorative Diyas

You need :

Earthen lamps
Paint (acrylic or oil)
Sand paper
Play dough

Method :

Flatten the play dough into a thick circle of five inch diametre.

Now cut this further into thinner strips of 3/4ths inch each.

Roll each strip as tightly as possible without pressing it out of shape. You will have a tightly rolled flower-like model. Press gently at the bottom of this roll and you will make a rose bud! Make several such roses.

Cut out leaf shapes from the rest of the strips of play dough, using a blunt knife.

Smoothen the lamps with sand paper and paint them. After the paint dries, fix the roses and leaves along their edges.

You will have a bunch of colourful and creative diyas to light up on festival days.

Use your imagination to make other decors in the place of the rose buds and leaves.

- Preethy.S, Std.VIII, P.S.B.B.S.S.S, Chennai

Dear Grandma,

I was asked to address the assembly at school. I learnt my topic well. But the moment I went on stage I forgot everything!

- T.Supraja,
Secunderabad

Dear Supraja,

This problem is not peculiar to you. It happens to many persons all over the world. Some students study well, but forget everything they read when they sit for exams. It is caused by tension and nervousness. You will have to build up self confidence. Keep on telling yourself that you are okay and that there is nothing to worry. Ask your parents and friends to be your audience and practise before them. Prayer and meditation will also help. Very soon you will overcome your stage fear.

★★★

My friend claims that she is my best friend, but does not act like one. She treats me as she treats everyone else. What is your advice? Please don't publish my name and address!

Not an Easy

Dear Anon,

The very fact that you do not want your name and address published, shows that you lack self-confidence. Why do you want to

be treated differently? In what way are you special? True friendship doesn't depend on the way you are treated. It flourishes inspite of short comings on either side. Accept the assurance of true friendship from your best friend and reciprocate.

Both of you will value the friendship better with mutual trust and frank exchange of views.

★★★

I study upto 11.30 pm. But my parents say it is better to study early in the monring. Is this true?

- S.K. Prabhu, Mandapam Camp

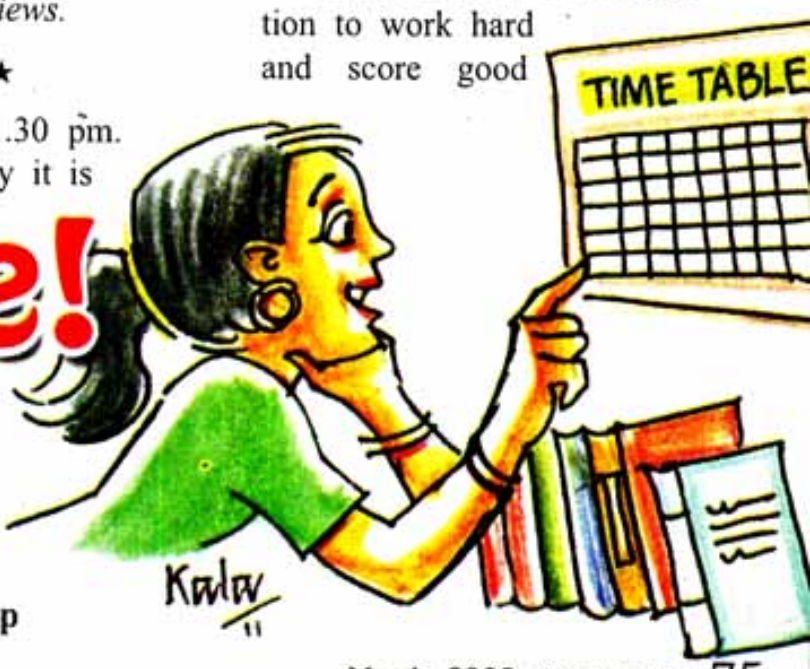
Joke!

Dear Prabhu,

What your parents say is absolutely correct. Your body and mind would have rested during sleep and will be fresh as a flower in the morning. You will be able to absorb more and remember what you read better if you make it a practise to study early in the morning. Haven't you heard of the saying, "Early to bed and early to rise is the best way to be healthy, happy and wise"!

★★★

I made a New Year resolution to work hard and score good



You will have no regrets.

★★★

I am interested in travelling and so I want to become a sailor or pilot. My parents approve. What is your opinion?

- R.Akshaya, Port Blair

Dear Akshaya,

You should not become a sailor or pilot just for the sake of travelling. You must be really interested in the job that you undertake. Being a pilot or sailor is no

marks. But I have this habit of post poning things until the last minute. Please help!

- K.Akshatha, Mangalore

Dear Akshatha,

Your intentions are good. But you lack the determination to act upon your ideals. Think about the end result of your lazy attitude. Postponement gives pleasure but it is temporary. Work piles up and increases your anxiety. Tension builds up resulting in reduction of the power to understand and remember. Naturally you will score poor marks. Set up a time table for study and leisure activity and stick to it.

easy task. It is hard work and the responsibilities are great. If you are upto it, go ahead. But remember, travelling is not restricted to these jobs. There are so many vocations with as many opportunities to travel. Choosing the right career should be your primary objective. Travelling is secondary. If you are successful in life, you will earn enough to see the world on your own!

★ ★ ★

I like to colour and draw. But when I draw, everyone teases me. It breaks my confidence. What am I to do?

- Sivaramakrishnan, Mumbai

Dear Siva,

If you are really interested in drawing and colouring you will not worry about people teasing you. Ignore them and continue with your hobby. They will soon stop teasing you. Instead they will start admiring your determination. Soon it will turn into appreciation of your work. Who knows, what you practise as a hobby today may become your full time occupation at a later date and bring you lanrels! So, don't give up! Good luck!

★ ★ ★

All my friends think that I am good at studies but not capable of cracking jokes. How can I prove myself to them?

- K.Varsha, Gurgaon

Dear Varsha,

A good joke will elicit response in the form of hearty laughter and that is the proof you are looking for. To get this response, your joke should be (a) relevant to the subject of conversation and (b) delivered with enthusiasm and a touch of drama. For heaven's sake don't begin with the words, "listen to this joke" or some such introductory remark. Make it spontaneous. I'm sure you would have realised by now that cracking a joke is no easy joke!

Love,
Grandmaworm

S.N. KANNAN

FEDERER'S Beautiful

The Grand Slam matches held every year, have become hall-mark events both for tennis players and fans. Of the four (Australian Open, US Open, French Open and Wimbledon) the first one to be held is the Australian Open. It has been in place from the year 1905, in the month of January. Tennis lovers from all over the world congregate each year, to watch the matches.

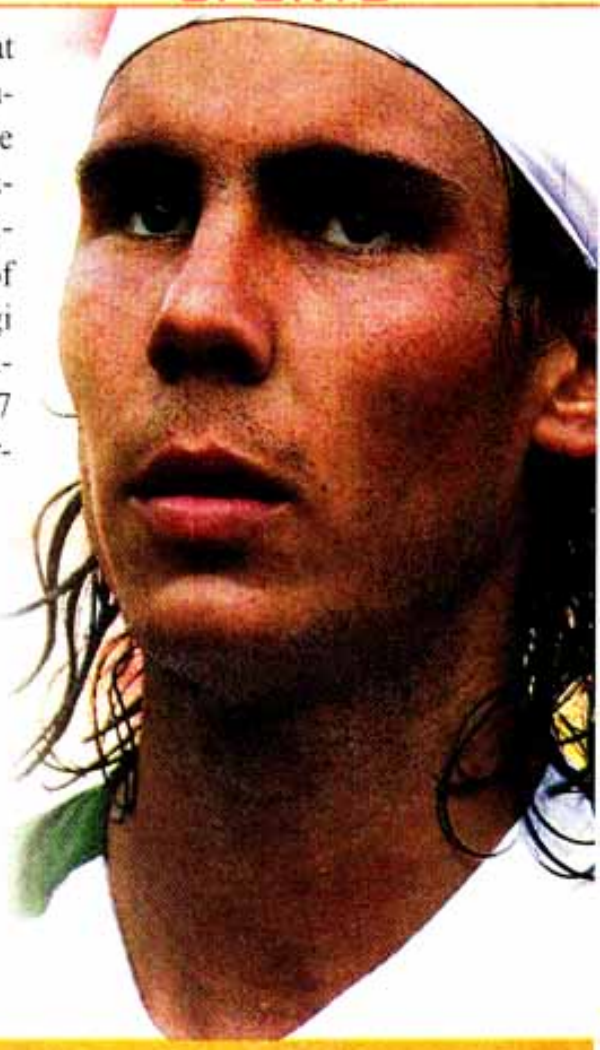
To win the Australian Open is an honour to a player. Rai Emerson has won it six times and Andre Agassi has won it four times. Margaret Court has won the women's title eleven times!

This year, Rafael Nadal and Serena Williams have emerged champs in this tournament. The Spanish Nadal had to fight hard to beat Roger Federer in a five-hour battle over seven matches. Federer the veteren player from Switzerland put up a beautiful fight. Even Nadal's greatest admirers could not help feeling a little sorry when Federer lost! So close was the contest and so passionate was each player's game! Federer held the number one place in world tennis for over four years and lost it to Nadal just last year.

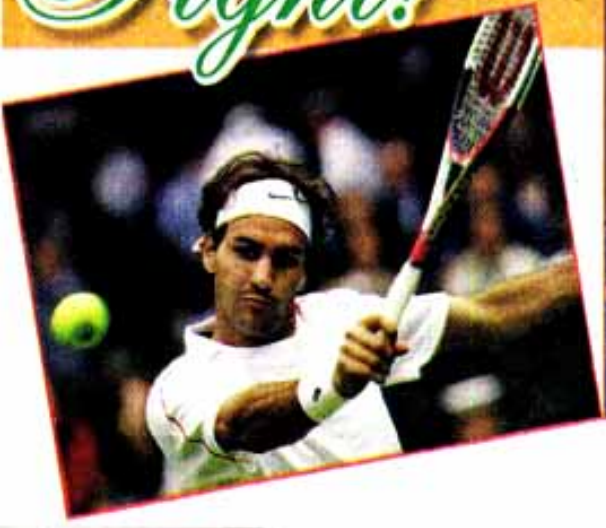
With twenty Grand Slam titles to her credit from singles, doubles and mixed doubles matches, the American Serena Williams is the world's number one woman tennis player! It was a cake-walk for her when pitted against the budding Diana Safina.

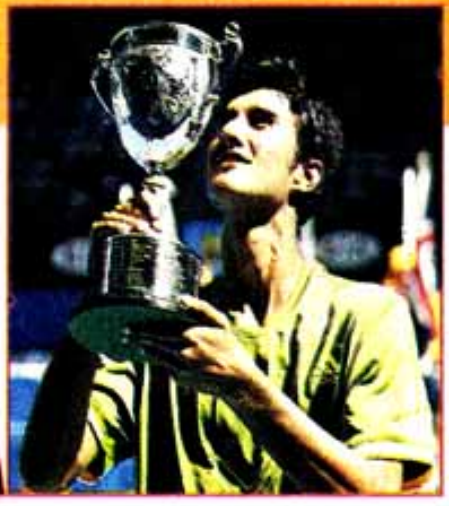
India felt proud and somewhat relieved too when Mahesh Bhupathi and Sania Mirza won the mixed doubles title of this tournament. Last year they got to the finals, but lost! In the foot steps of Sania Mirza, sixteen year old Yugi Pampri has won the Junior Australian Open Championship in a 57 minute final match against her German counterpart. The Indians to win Junior Championships earlier were Ramanathan Krishnan – 1954 Wimbledon, Ramesh Krishnan – 1979 Wimbledon and French Open and Leander Paes – 1990 Wimbledon and US Open.

This year, more than 60,000 tennis lovers gathered on a given day to view the Australian Open Championship.



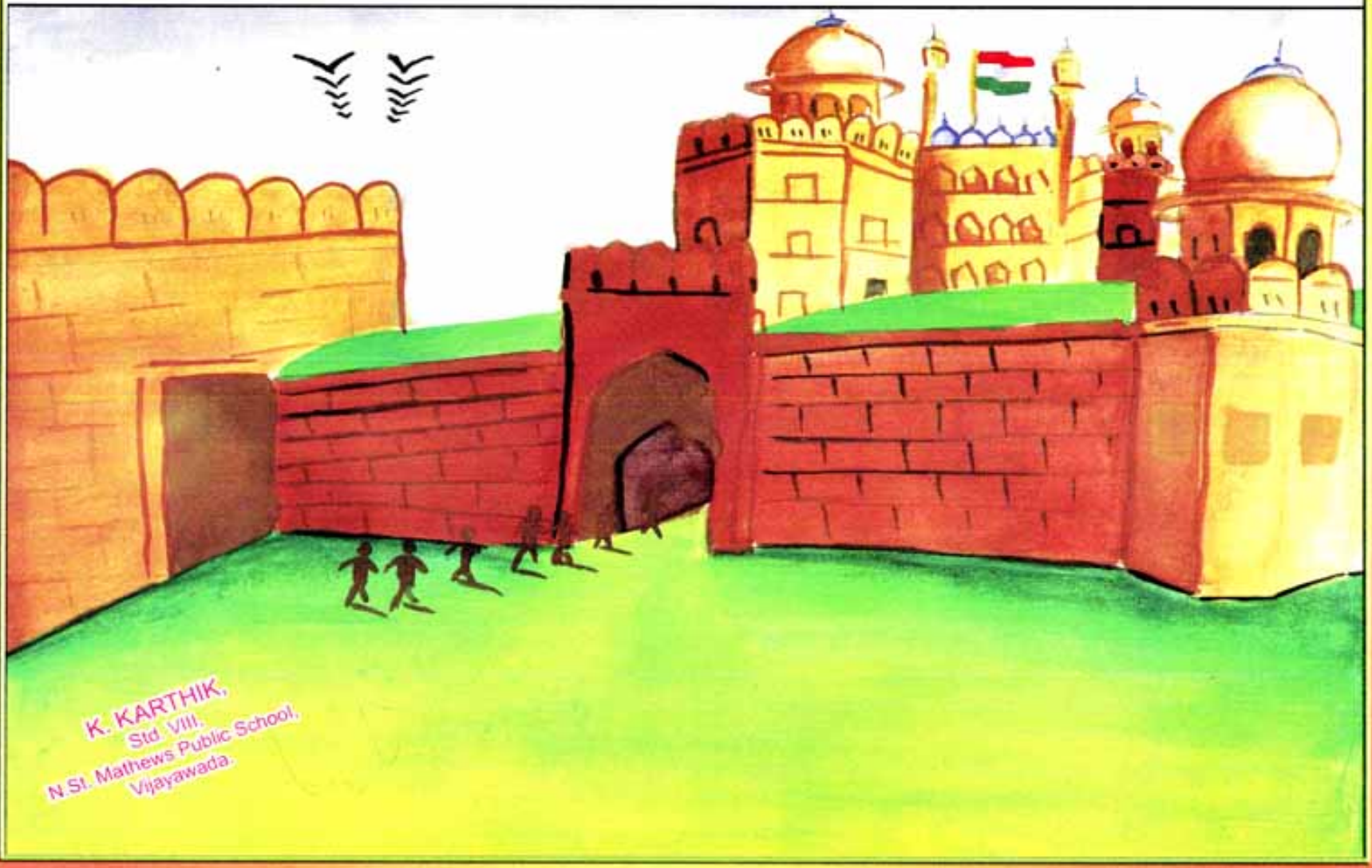
Fight!





Billu

Concept, Pictures: PILLAI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